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American Notes.

An Apposite Verse. During the exuberance of peace celebration in Philadelphia when the whistles began to shriek and the streets to resound with shout and turmoil the bells of old Christ Church started to chime the music of the triumph hymn:

"The strife is o'er, the battle done;
The victory of life is won;
The song of triumph has begun,
Alleluia!"

The Y. M. C. A. is Entering upon One of the Most Extensive Educational Campaigns in history. Army boys in both Europe and America are to be given educational opportunities of every required type. Illiterates are to be taught reading, history and civics; French instruction is to be given on the ground on a wholesale scale; motor mechanics will learn motor engineering; mathematics, law, engineering, economics, business administration will all have their instructors at work. Eight million dollars is to be set apart for textbooks. No better plan could be devised to protect the men abroad from demoralization. Bible classes in army camps have had a large development. Thus Camp Grant had 49 Bible classes attended by 4068 during a recent week; Camp Sherman 47 with 4512, Camp Taylor 180 classes and 13,866 men attending, Camp Lee 321 classes and 11,254 in attendance.

Coffin-nail Apologists. *Association Men* tells of "a gentleman prominent in religious and social reform circles who has fought cigarettes all his life and hated them like poison for the harm they have done to growing boys" as having read the Christian Endeavor orator Mr. Poling's defense of cigarette distribution among the troops. Whereupon he ordered ten copies of Mr. Poling's book for distribution among his anti-cigarette friends. "Mr. Poling had justified to his mind the work of Christian men in thus handling tobacco."

Si tacuisses, Mr. Poling!

St. Mark's Methodist Episcopal Church in West 53d St., New York, is characterized by the *Christian Advocate* as perhaps, all things considered, the most flourishing Methodist society on Manhattan Island. This high praise is called forth by a recent example of sacrificial giving by the members—all of them colored people without wealth—of $9337. The pastor is Dr. William H. Brooks, chaplain of the Fifteenth Regiment.

The Laymen's Missionary Movement among the Colored People is making good headway. In five cities,—Charlotte, Durham, Columbia, Augusta and Savannah, —there has been a total of 3234 registered delegates, an average of 650 in each convention. The 49 sessions were attended by approximately 40,000 people, among whom were 425 pastors and 250 students for the ministry. The coöperation of white pastors, Y. M. C. A. secretaries and mission workers has been gratifying. Increased interest in missions, and larger contributions are reported. Two colored churches have promised to pay the salary of $600 each for missionaries to Africa. In the First Congregationalist Church in Raleigh the Rev. and Mrs. Henry C. McDowell have been set apart for mission work in Angola, Africa,—being the first representatives of the colored constituency of the American Board to go abroad. The occasion is described as "the Haystack of the colored people." The church was packed with intelligent, prosperous people, in the front pews sitting the pastors of some fifty of the churches planted by the American Missionary Association together with teachers from the schools, academies and colleges throughout the South. Dr. Patton of the American Board declares that there are hundreds of villages in Angola ready to receive the Gospel with eagerness when Mr. McDowell lands.

Red Men are Turning to Christ as Never before, writes Dr. Barnes of the

American Baptist Home Missionary Society. Among the Crows of the Upper Big Horn, Montana, leading men have recently taken the Jesus Road in such numbers that a new church has had to be established. In the vicinity of the Yosemite, California, two new churches have been organized,—Nipinnawasee where thirty-six have been baptized and Coarsegold where thirty-nine have confessed Christ. One of them, 101 years old, remembers vividly the raids of the white men which drove the red men from the fertile land to the mountains. His natural hatred of whites has been overcome by the influence of Christ. Some of the Mono converts are being employed in grape picking and a grape baron writes:

"Can you get me enough Indians of this kind to harvest my whole crop next year? Instead of being lazy and hopelessly dissipated as I used to know them they are now by far the most reliable and efficient hands I can get. I know what I am talking about for I have tried for years all the fifty-seven varieties of people we have about here, ranging from Yankees through every kind of European to Mexicans, Hindus and Japanese."

The Old Spanish Clergy in Porto Rico find it hard to accommodate themselves to the fact that Catholic Spain is no longer ruler of the colonies of the West Indies. The fifteenth of August is the Feast Day of the Assumption of the Virgin,—a high day in Catholic countries. It is of course no holiday under the American as under the Spanish flag, but nevertheless the priest of Hormigueros, Porto Rico, passing along the street and noticing the municipal street cleaners hard at work, ordered them instantly to lay down their brooms for the day. And they obeyed. "Are ships to have two captains, lay and clerical?" asks the *Porto Rico Evangelico,* commenting on this incident. "Must street sweepers march to Canossa behind the Stars and Stripes?"

In Mrs. Russell Sage's Large Distribution at death ($40,000,000) the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions receives $1,600,000 and the Women's Board of Foreign Missions the same amount; the Presbyterian Board of Ministerial Relief $800,000, the Presbyterian Hospital of New York $800,000, the New York City Mission $1,600,000, the American Bible Society $1,200,000, the New York Bible Society $400,000.

American Methodist Missions (Home and Foreign) received during the last fiscal year the magnificent sum of $6,905,869,—an advance of $865,958 on the year preceding. The multifarious calls for war relief are thought rather to have helped than hindered in that they have enlarged the vision of need and service and developed an enthusiasm for giving.

A Large Gift to the Methodist Centenary Movement has come from Mr. John Fisher, a manufacturer of Attleboro, Mass., in the shape of the Attleboro Sanitarium, a fine large stone building with equipment and a hundred acres of woods, farm land and meadows. This is one of the best-equipped sanitariums in the country and will be of utmost service to the Board of Foreign Missions for the resting and nervous repair of its missionaries. The methods used are those of Battle Creek, and the giver hopes for the time when the Methodist Church will organize (as the Adventists have done) a chain of such institutions across the country.

The Primate of Greece, Dr. Metaxakis, who has been visiting America, expresses himself as in close sympathy with American Protestantism and deeply approving the work of American Protestant missions in the Levant. His own church he characterizes as free and democratic, guiltless of persecutions, without leanings to Roman clericalism.

Rabbi Browne of New York was invited some time ago, in the absence of the regular Senate chaplain, to offer prayer. This is the result as printed in the *Congressional Record:*

"Our Father Who art in heaven, on earth and all over the universe, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom has come with the dawn of creation and being established upon principles eternal and universal, its laws enforce themselves alike in all climes and in all ages, wherefore Thy will must be done among the celestial in heaven even as it is amongst Thy mortal sons on earth. Thou hast endowed nature with productive energies subservient to man's will whereby Thou givest us this day our daily bread while by imparting to us Thy Divine Spirit Thou enablest us to enact laws for the guidance of society so that human passions

lead us not into temptation but Divine grace delivers us from all evil."

Union of Churches in Vermont Towns is being effected with good results. Since May, 1917, twenty-two such fusions have been brought about. Fourteen ministers are now receiving more adequate salaries and as many have been freed for service at other points. Nineteen hundred dollars of home mission money is saved for use in more needy fields. The denominations coöperating have been Congregationalist, Methodist and Baptist. In some cases one church building has been reserved for the church and the other has been set apart for remodeling into a community house. It is stated that increased church attendance and greater influence of the church on the community have followed these unions.

The Baptists of Texas. The General Convention of Texas Baptists last year set a mark of $150,000 for direct work in the state, $30,000 to clean up indebtedness and $25,000 for special work in army camps in the state. Over $200,000 was raised and a surplus of $30,000 remains in the treasury. The educational system of the Texas Baptist churches includes Baylor University with 1200 students, Baylor College for Women with 600, three other colleges and twelve academies, scattered throughout the state. Their theological seminary at Fort Worth has an excellent plant and three hundred young men and women in training. The charitable institutions are Buckner Orphans' Home with 1600 acres of fertile land and substantial buildings sheltering seven hundred orphan children; the Old People's Home at Palacios where *emeritus* Baptist ministers and wives are provided for; and a number of sanitariums and hospitals. The largest of these is the Baptist Memorial Sanitarium at Dallas with property valued at $1,000,000. That at Houston is valued at $250,000. Both of these institutions are always full to overflowing. Ground has been purchased at Waco and San Antonio for other sanitariums. Further, the city of El Paso has recently presented to the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board a large plant to be utilized as a sanitarium for the tuberculous sick. It consists of 143 acres of land valued at $20,000, a water plant and an administration building erected at a cost of $65,000. Southern Baptists are to complete and operate this sanitarium.

A Father to the Fatherless in Hawaii. This is Mr. Sokabe, a Congregationalist minister who, with his devoted wife, carries on an orphanage for Japanese children. The Japanese Christians have given him hearty coöperation. Thus on one Easter Day, having previously sent word to them of an indebtedness of $1500, he placed a box upon the church table and asked each to give as the emergency required. When the box was opened it was found to contain a few cents above $1500. This year, however, he has been obliged in the following letter to appeal to American Christians in Hawaii.

Dear Mr. Scudder:

Until now my people always deciding my school debts but since the war they are doing their extremity and have no surplus at present. This is why I wrote you and make you trouble. Since last year all prices became high, yet the boarding of children could not rise. From this term I decided to charge them $7 small children and $8 big children yet these are not enough. But if I want them to pay enough almost all of them will be compelled to leave the school; if then my Christian Boarding School (only one in this island) must be closed.

Thus I get new debt since last year. Don't think my debt is my private. My debt is not from overexpenses but is rather shortage to pay that came from children's small paying.

Every minister who has the like work, getting aid every year from among the rich friends but I have none. I believe I have the right to ask aid among white Christian friends in these islands. I believe I am doing all my best to educate, to Americanize, to let them understand true American spirit, true democracy, true freedom. I am looking upon myself as General Armstrong, Dr. Frisel or Buca Washington (I wrote by phonetic spell) among my own people as they were among the negroes. Have I not then the right to ask aid among white Christian friends? Have they not owe to minister in carnal things if I am ministering spiritual things? When I finished this letter I found that the hand pointing five minutes to three the morning of 27th. I am yours sincerely,

S. Sokabe.

Honomu, Hawaii.

Illustrations of Grace. Some months ago the Central Presbyterian Church of New York sent **Mr. John Goode** into the mountains of Kentucky to conduct an evangelistic campaign. He has spent many strenuous weeks preaching in the cabins, log schoolhouses and courthouses; organizing Sunday schools, working in moonlight schools and bringing to moonshiner and mountaineers the story of Christ's transforming power. Six years ago this man was crook and jailbird. His life since he was ten years old had been passed intermittently in reformatories. When Justice Cowan sentenced him to a term of three years in Sing Sing prison he said that his name should have been John Bad, so brutal and hardened did he appear to him. Mr. Goode found Christ in the Bowery Mission, New York.

"Gid" Higginbotham was for years an impassioned gambler. Then he was converted. He has been preaching to the troops in France. In one place he found a good deal of gambling going on so he gave an account of his own experiences with the mania and urged the boys to give up playing with it. At the close of the meeting he said:

"We usually take up a collection in religious meetings. Two of you boys get the hats and pass them. But I don't want money; I want cards and dice."

The collection was two hatfuls! The colonel asked him to repeat the lecture in all the regimental shacks and when he had finished 576 men had sworn off gambling. Then he went back to the first shack and said:

"There's another chapter to that story, boys. I tried with all my power to keep from ever gambling again. I swore off as you have done but the old habit would come back. I never was able to keep from it until I let Jesus Christ control my life. Now I want to tell you how to let Jesus Christ come into your lives."

When he got down to the last shack he had 365 men won for Christ.

Methodist Social Work. The Social Service Work of the Southern Methodist churches grows from year to year in extent and effectiveness. In 1901 the first Wesley House was established,—in Nashville. In 1903 four more centers were set in operation in Atlanta, Dallas, Kansas City and St. Louis. Now there are forty-one, carried on by thirty-eight City Mission Boards. The Wesley Houses minister to whites; the Bethlehem Houses to the black poor. Ninety-two deaconesses, 132 salaried workers and 761 voluntary workers have constituted the working force of these settlements. Last year 24,269 homes representing 317,572 people were directly reached. Nine day nurseries ministered to 735 children. A matron of the day nursery at one of these settlements reports as part of her year's work the serving of 10,822 cooked dinners to the mothers and children in the nursery and of 9806 lunches to the children. Five thousand four hundred and sixteen baths were given to children under supervision. For these services the people themselves contributed $792. From Mrs. R. W. MacDonell's report we further learn that

"two hundred and eight industrial classes gave training to 4195 people. In our four clinics 14,316 patients were treated. There were 74,145 visits made by deaconesses and missionaries. There has been a demand this year for coöperative homes for young working women beyond that of any year in our history. There are seven of these maintained by the City Mission Boards and served by nine deaconesses. The capacity of these homes is limited. At San Francisco Inn nearly eight hundred were turned away for lack of space. The same story comes from the homes at Lexington, Ky., Waco, Tex., and elsewhere. To protect young working women and to throw about them a Christian environment is the task of the Church. . . . . Thirteen business corporations have provided houses free of rent in neighborhoods where it has been impossible for us to secure locations without their aid. These gifts are accepted with the understanding that we compromise no principle in the event of labor disturbances. During the past year three large corporations have appealed to us to provide trained workers for such work."

An Evangelical Romance. Dr. W. H. Morse of the Bible Mission, Hartford, has had many picturesque experiences with his Italians but we doubt if any surpasses that of Nero Fittaiulo, or Fitt, as he came presently to be, after reaching America. When Mr. Fitt first disembarked as immigrant he fell in with a warm-hearted negro Baptist who

gave him a Bible and took him to his church. Upon his conversion he shrank from going to a white church and was baptized by the colored minister. He remained a member until, through his efforts among the Italians, an Italian Baptist Mission was established which presently grew into a church. He used at the same time every opportunity to send Testaments to his relatives and friends in the old country.

One day Mr. Fetler, the Russian evangelist, came to town and lectured on the spiritual needs of Russia. Fitt's interest was fired and he determined to prepare himself for evangelical work among the Russian people. Finding that Russian was not taught in the evening school of his own city he entered the evening classes in an adjacent city, although this involved a forty minutes' ride every night. He planned to open an agency for a Neapolitan motor cycle house at Petrograd to support himself while evangelizing the Russians.

Then came the war and he was called to Italy for training. When he left for Naples he carried with him a supply of Testaments to distribute in the army. As it happened his regiment was ordered to General Allenby's command and he presently found himself in Persia. While in Kermanshah a case of Russian Testaments, Bibles and Psalters was found which the Turks had confiscated on the retreat of the Russian army. Communicating with Mr. Mackertich, the agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society to whom the Scriptures belonged, Mr. Fitt obtained permission to distribute them among the Russian prisoners and wounded in the military hospital at Tabriz. The Russians were overjoyed to receive the Testaments from one who could speak to them in their own language.

A Hebrew-Christian Evangelist among Spanish-Americans. The Rev. A. B. de Roos, who is evangelist among Latin-Americans for the American Baptist Home Mission Society, has published in *Missions* a little four-page autobiography. Mr. de Roos was born in Amsterdam, of Jewish parents. His father was a religious man who observed with strictness the set feast and fast days. No meals were prepared on these latter and prayers were offered all day from sunrise to sunset. At the Passover his father would sit at the head of the table dressed in a long white shroud, explaining the marvelous deliverance of God's people out of Egypt. The Passover meal was striking in a symbolic way to which Mr. de Roos calls attention. There were on the table *three* unleavened breads separated by a white napkin. The first represented God; the second the priest; the third Israel. Only one of these unleavened breads was broken during the ceremony. The strange fact is that *the one representing the priest, or mediator, was the one which was broken.* Of this the whole family received a small portion.

From this atmosphere of Jewish Puritanism Mr. de Roos emigrated as a young man to America and plunged into a life of restless pleasure seeking. He attached himself to a theatrical company and wandered over the land from end to end. Finally, being stranded in Philadelphia, he came in contact with a Christian family in a quiet middle-class home. The Christian atmosphere was a revelation to him. Yet his inherited Jewish hatred against Christ was so intense that he would spit every time he heard the name mentioned. He did not realize that Christians prayed and laughed at the thought of it, but when he heard the Lord's Prayer he was so struck with its beauty (and also with the very satisfactory fact that Christ was not named in it) that he committed it to memory. Then came his first sight of a Bible, which he studied unremittingly for two weeks, night and day.

"One night reading the passage where Simeon took the Child Christ in his arms and said 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: . . . : for mine eyes have seen thy salvation,' I saw the light and accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour."

A thirty-six-page letter to his old mother describing his conversion was answered by curses, reproaches and excommunication.

A Twenty-three-Year Ministry. Mr. de Roos began his ministry as an industrial missionary to Central America among the Indians of the Rio

Frio. When he arrived in Nicaragua there was not an evangelical Christian in the whole country. Priests attacked him on street, in hotel and in railway car. His Bibles were burned on public dumping grounds.

"For three long years I never walked the streets but that stones would fly everywhere. One day my wife and myself with our little baby, a year old, had to flee three times for our lives."

Yet after some years a number of strong congregations were established. Family sickness obliging return to the United States, Mr. de Roos evangelized in five tongues at the St. Louis Fair. Becoming intensely interested in the Filipino constabulary he went to the Philippines as a special evangelist among these twenty-five thousand men.

"After I had carried on a very successful campaign both among the native soldiers and in the American Army and Navy, the Roman Catholic authorities interfered and made it almost impossible for me to continue."

So he went back to Central America. A revival broke out there. Among the converts was the nephew of the President of the Republic (a decided atheist), who is now a self-supporting preacher of the Word, and a financial backer of a number of native evangelists.

Then followed a three months' campaign in the Canal Zone.

"Uncle Sam filled the Canal with water; we filled it with glory. One missionary baptized seventy persons in a little pool at the Canal bottom one morning. So anxious were the people to study the Bible that they would get up at half-past four in the morning to attend the Bible class with its 175 members."

During a later campaign in the City of Mexico, two thousand people listened to the Gospel every night for three weeks. Over seven hundred persons were converted, one being a nun of the Convent of the Good Shepherd at Monterey. Indeed, several nuns and priests have been converted under Mr. de Roos' ministry. Another convert was the private secretary of President Carranza, a noble Christian man. During a later series of meetings in Monterey two hundred names were received of candidates for church membership. Mr. de Roos has subsequently held evangelistic meetings in Porto Rico during three months with marked results.

A Monument to a Cutthroat. This has just been erected in Avilés, Spain, and commemorates the activities of Pedro Menendez de Avilés, the explorer of Florida. The children studying colonial history in our red schoolhouses know all about him. In October, 1565, he left Spain charged with the mission of destroying the French colonies in Florida and Carolina, and with the title of pioneer of Florida and governor of Cuba. He was especially enjoined by the Most Catholic monarch, Philip II, to root out the Huguenots settled in Carolina under the protection of Admiral Coligny. Passing from Havana with a formidable fleet, he massacred the Calvinist leader Ribault with his six hundred fellow Protestants, "not as Frenchmen but as heretics," according to the inscriptions which he erected on the spot, and then established the forts of St. Augustine and St. Theresa. This occurred at a time when France and Spain were at peace, and with circumstances so horrible that even Menendez' own followers protested. Three years later vengeance came upon the Spanish colony left in Florida at the hand of Dominic de Gorges, a Frenchman, who stated that the reprisals were made, "not to Spaniards but to liars and assassins." Menendez however was in Spain at the time and escaped the due reward of his deed.

But he has not escaped a monument at the hands of twentieth-century Spain.

Praying Saloon-Keepers. If ever a folio volume is published, made up of unwise utterances of liberal theologians, we may perhaps see in it the following from the late Dr. W. DeWitt Hyde's "God's Education of Man": "The saloon-keeper is another example of a class of men with whom, were He with us to-day, Jesus would be on friendly terms." We were reminded of this sentence in learning that the Bartenders' Union is probably the only American labor organization which regularly opens and closes its meetings with prayer. Mr. Stelzle in his excellent "Why Prohibition!" reproduces their ritual:

"At the opening of the meeting the president gives three raps bringing the members to their feet. 'Let us be silent while the chaplain invokes the Father's aid,' orders the presiding officer. Here is the prayer offered:

"'Be with us, our Father, in this Convention. Grant us, we pray Thee, a part of Thy wisdom that we may pursue the path which causes all men to acknowledge the brotherhood of men and Fatherhood of Thee.'

"At the close of the meeting the president says, 'Let us be silent while the chaplain delivers thanks to the Father.' And the chaplain prays:

"'Thou, O Father, Who hast created all things as they are, now that we are about to quit this circle and mingle again with the selfish world, we pray Thee to protect and shield us and our work from evil hands, and may we all at last be received into the circle of Thy love. Amen.'"

Then they return to their work of stealing the children's shoes, the widows' bread, the fathers' health and earnings.

The New Song of the Christian Church. There are two references in Revelation to a New Song and one which speaks of the Song of Moses and of the Lamb, "Hymns New and Old," as Dr. Rendel Harris quaintly explains (in the *Expositor*). The "New Songs" of the Psalter (Psalms xcvi., cviii., etc.), "were an intimation of a future time when, to use the language of the Odes of Solomon 'there should be none voiceless or dumb because the Lord had given a mouth to His creatures.'" Newness is the mark of all things under the New Covenant,—new teaching, new law, new heaven, new earth, renovation of all things. The New Song is constantly identified by Eusebius and other early Christian writers with the New Covenant, especially in its relations with the Gentiles. It is the joyful announcement of God's reconciliation with the Gentiles and is anticipated in the Psalms mentioned above.

"Sing unto the LORD, a new song:
Sing unto the LORD, *all the earth*. . . . .
Declare his glory among *the Gentiles*,
His marvellous works among *all the peoples*. . . . .
Bring to the LORD, *ye clans of the Gentiles*,
Bring to the LORD, glory for his name. . . . .
Say *among the Gentiles* that the LORD reigneth. . . . .
Sing unto the LORD, a new song;
For he hath done marvellous things; . . . .
The LORD hath made known his salvation.
Before the Gentiles he hath revealed his righteousness."

Eusebius says of these passages:

"In these words he declares the New Song not to belong to the Jewish people but to all the Gentiles, the Old Song that came by Moses being proper to the Jews only."

In the passages in Revelation Dr. Harris finds a coupling of the Gentiles with the New Song parallel to that in the Psalms quoted. Thus Rev. v. 9: "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy....: for thou . . . . hast redeemed us to God . . . . *out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.*" Rev. xv. 3: "And they sing the song of Moses . . . . and . . . . the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works . . . . thou *King of Gentiles or nations* (marg.). . . . . *For all nations* shall come and worship before thee." And in Rev. xiv. 3: while the 144,000 "redeemed from among men" sing the New Song, the angel appears "having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." The passage in the 40th Psalm, "And he hath put a new song in my mouth," is given by Eusebius its predictive reference to the New Covenant by the following sixth and seventh verses:

"Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not. . . . . Lo I come. . . . . I delight to do thy will," etc.

First Corinthians, Thirteen. It is a common practice in Belgium among the sellers of singing birds, to blind the little feathered creatures in order to make them, as they suppose, sing more sweetly. The English poet, Mr. Thomas Hardy, refers to this Hunnish treatment of the helpless in a new volume of poems.

THE BLINDED BIRD.

So zestfully canst thou sing,
And all this indignity,
With God's consent, on thee!
Blinded ere yet a-wing
By the red hot needle thou;
I stand and wonder how
So zestfully thou canst sing.

Resenting not such wrong,
Thy grievous pain forgot,
Eternal dark thy lot,
Groping thy whole life long,
After that stab of fire;
Enjailed in pitiless wire,
Resenting not such wrong.

Who hath charity? This bird.
Who suffereth long and is kind,
Is not provoked, though blind
And alive sepulchred?
Who hopeth, endureth all things,
Who thinketh no evil but sings?
Who is divine? This bird.

The Czecho-Slovaks in Winchester, England. In the early part of the fifteenth century, the Hussites of Bohemia waged heroic war of self-defense against the Catholic German and Imperial forces. Their successes were so pronounced, that Catholics of various parts of Europe became alarmed, and entered into a crusade to suppress the threatening heresy. Among the princes of the Church to throw themselves into this movement was Cardinal Henry Beaufort of Winchester, the son of John of Gaunt, who was made papal legate to organize and lead the campaign. In 1427 Cardinal Beaufort went to Bohemia and participated in engagements in which his party was so disastrously defeated that he was obliged to flee for his life. He now rests under a marble monument in the Cathedral of Winchester. There is no little picturesqueness in the fact that the descendants of the Utraquists of Bohemia recently visited Winchester Cathedral where their old persecuting enemy is interred. They were Czecho-Slovak troops who were passing through England, and no doubt recalled the English Cardinal. A correspondent in the *Spectator* describes

"these thousands of men in strange uniforms with war-worn banners, who passed in slow step, singing in wondrous harmony down into the great cathedral. Keen men with sad, earnest faces, they filled the nave of the cathedral. They had asked permission to attend the services, and also to sing. When the anthem was ended the clergy paused in the service, and then in splendid accord, with strange delicacy of light and shade, the Czechs sang in their own tongue a rendering of our National Anthem, followed by their own National Hymn, "Where is My Home?" Later they came again bearing their banners with the red chalice upon it. The chants they sang with their fierce expressive rendering, were the war-songs of the Hussites. They bore the chalice on their banners, and each wore the same chalice on his shoulder straps. The chalice signified the right their ancestors fought for to take the cup in the Holy Communion, as well as the bread.

The White Cross Society of Japan. This was organized in Tokyo in 1911 by eighteen Christian doctors to fight the White Plague. Although not a statedly Christian society it is carried on in the spirit of Christian testimony. The seven directors and twenty-nine councilors constituting the present Board of Control are all earnest Christian men. Its president is Mr. Ebara, prominent in all Christian enterprises. The total membership is at present 846 but in addition to the regular members there are 1021 supporters of the society, many of whom are men of prominence.

Mr. McCoy describes in *The Christian Movement in Japan* some of the activities of this organization. Consultation offices where examinations and advice may be secured by tubercular patients are maintained at Motomachi, Hongo Ku, Tokyo and Yodobashi. In 1917 the total number of consultations was 1789. A sanitarium for curable cases with thirty beds is operated in Kamakura. Tubercular patients can secure here good medical care at moderate rates. In 1917 sixty-nine in-patients were in residence for a total of 7349 days. Arrangements have been made with a large number of doctors and apothecaries in Tokyo and suburbs whereby the poor may secure free treatment. This work has met a great need, especially among the wageworkers, who have been seriously exposed to tuberculosis. The number treated in 1917 was 1328.

The Society has held lectures and exhibitions on prevention of tuberculosis in factories, schools and churches. It has sent sympathetic visitors to homes in which deaths have occurred and in such cases given advice as to medical investigation and disinfection. It has issued a monthly publication entitled *The White Cross* with propaganda material such as "Consumption Can be Cured," "A Catechism on Tuberculosis for Grammar School Children," "The

Warning Bell," "On Capillary Bronchitis," "The Whip of Cords." August 1, 1917, it opened an Open-air School for children with tubercular tendencies at Chigasaki, about an hour and a half by train from Tokyo. This institution consists at present of five buildings, to which three more will soon be added. Here, under ideal surroundings and with careful attention and proper food, the Society endeavors to restore the health of such children so that they may take their places among healthy children of their own age.

Brief Notes from Abroad. **One Thousand Pounds Sterling** for every working day of the year is the present expenditure of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Church Missionary Society is carrying on **a campaign of missionary propaganda** in the ships of the British navy. This takes the form of missionary lectures with films and lantern slides and other illustrative matter.

Mr. Thomas Mordey, a shipowner and well-known Methodist layman of Cardiff, Wales, has bought, at the price of $125,000, Ebley House in Gloucestershire for the establishment of the National Institute for the Blind, where the higher education of blind girls will be carried on.

Tickford Abbey in Buckinghamshire has been presented to the National Brotherhood Movement by Mrs. William Ward as a center for summer schools, rest home, etc. The Brotherhood has undertaken a campaign to raise two million shillings for its work under the charge of the Rev. Thomas Sykes with the Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson as chairman of the finance committee. Of the Brotherhood's one hundred adopted Serbian orphans sixty have been taken over by individuals. The Brotherhood is planning extensive relief and reconstruction work in Belgium and Northern France.

By the Death of Miss Agnes Weston the world loses another great Christian social worker. Lord Beresford said of her in the *Times* that to overrate her self-sacrificing and chivalrous work for the men of the British fleet would be impossible. Her letters to the Service, printed monthly, finally reached a circulation of a half million. In these she advised, counseled, encouraged, warned. They were read not only by the seamen in the warships but by men in lighthouses, coast guard stations and naval barracks. With Miss Wintz, a friend of equal competence, she opened and carried on two great Sailors' Rest Homes in Devenport and Portsmouth for forty years. These were operated with utmost skill and efficiency and were also in their atmosphere veritable homes. Miss Weston was wont to send immediately a small sum of money to relatives of seamen when news of their loss at sea became known,—a delicate and practical charity. "Her name will long be remembered with affection and respect."

A Petition of the Women's Council of St. George's United Free Church to the General Assembly, asking that measures be taken to bring home to the new electorate the opportunities and responsibilities of the franchise, called forth in response the suggestion that speakers be sent to Work Parties, Mothers' Meetings, etc., to give political information to the women. As soon as the Franchise Act was passed the Women's Home Mission took effective steps to make its influence felt (through the local Women's Home Mission Committees) in the various women's civic councils throughout the country.

The Assembly declared that

"while at times it has been regarded almost as a sign of spirituality to neglect the political life of the land, the truth is that any man or woman neglecting these affairs, is guilty of a very grave sin for which he or she ought to make humble confession to God, and ask for forgiveness with purpose of new obedience."

It calls for the election of men of high Christian character on Town Councils and Public Boards and urges especially that the Christian electorate interest itself in the housing question, matters relating to the birth and upbringing of children, educational affairs, conditions of industrial life, women's industrial future and the whole question of international relations.

A Church for Victory and Peace is to be erected in England by Roman Catholics and subscriptions are asked for it in the *Tablet.* All Catholics are called on to

make it a real national shrine to Mary. The form of petition, "To Mary, *ever a Virgin,* Mother of God, Help of Christians, Queen of Peace," is printed with blank spaces asking for "The safe return of ——, That the souls of —— fallen in war may rest in peace," and "For Victory and Peace," and with the words:

"I willingly make the offering of £ s. d. in order to help build a Church to thy honor as Queen of Peace." This petition is later to be placed at the foot of a statue of Mary within the church and masses are to be said for the giver.

"There is Considerable Leakage (from Catholicism) in all stages of life in this country," said Father M'Nabb at a recent meeting of the Catholic Evidence Guild, "which puts off the conversion of England to an indefinite date. Thirty-eight thousand children are lost annually to the faith. In view of these facts Cardinal Manning once said, 'We have lost the people of England.' A very hard-working priest in East London remarked, 'One of my greatest sorrows is to recognize the failure of the Catholic Church to teach the laboring classes.'"

When Mrs. Annie Besant was Elected President of the Last National Congress of India various Hindus present, according to the *Indian Witness,* openly proposed to deify her and offer to her idolatrous worship. She has managed to reconcile many Indians to her leadership as a European by telling them that her soul is Indian and that she is on earth now in the guise of a white woman as punishment for some terrible crime committed by her in a previous existence. Her next reincarnation she prophesies will be in a Hindu body.

Noyon with its Home of Calvin was made a rubbish heap by German artillery last fall. A correspondent in the clerical *Corriere d' Italia* characterizes this as

"the last expression of the ancient theological controversy between Lutheranism and Calvinism. The outrage was committed by followers of Luther with Lutheran cannon forged in a Lutheran foundry of Lutheran steel."

That General Foch is a Man of Prayer appears from a letter from a member of the American Expeditionary Force in the *Los Angeles Times.* This lad whose home is in San Bernardino happened into a church and observed a gray man with the eagles of a general on the collar of his shabby uniform. For three quarters of an hour he was on his knees. When he passed out into the sunlight the American private was surprised to see soldiers salute in great excitement and women and children stopping in their tracks with awe-struck faces as he passed. It was Foch praying in the height of a forward movement and daily prayer has been his unvarying custom.

The Drink Interests of France, alarmed at the international movement against alcohol, are organizing "Societies of the Sons of Rabelais" in all the towns and villages of France. In these are to be grouped the saloon-keepers, home distillers, vineyardists, "and all users of drink who will not submit to shame at the hands of the temperance people." The great distilling interests are to furnish the funds. Rabelais, the obscene monk, is indeed the spiritual father of these elements in the life of France.

Religious Revival Among the Kaffirs in French Army Camps is reported in the *Free Church Record.*

"Never since I felt something of the fervor of the Welsh revival have I been in quite such an atmosphere as this," says the writer. "Strong cries and tears were not unknown. They never wearied of their services. Perhaps twice a week and four times on Sundays every seat in the hut would fill up with swarthy worshipers. It was a male-voice choir in three and at times four parts,—harmony never to be forgotten. At prayer every man knelt and several would lead with wonderful flow of language and gift of passionate utterance. There are 160 really converted men among them,—65 of whom have been converted since they came to France, according to the chaplain of the contingent."

A Spanish Newspaper, *El Noticiero Sevillano,* **Printed Lately the Following News Item.**

"Yesterday evening a patient in the Central Hospital named Manuel Escandon, a man of fifty-five years, who occupied bed 434 in the Hall of Saint Clement, grew distinctly worse. Because of the seriousness of his state the Holy Oils and Extreme Unction were administered to him by the Chaplain of the Hospital, D. José Cervantes. The invalid, it seems, committed some irreverence, at which the chaplain in anger

gave him in the face a blow with the crucifix which he carried, producing a contusion with bleeding. The case has been reported to the authorities by the nurse and the physician."

Two Spanish Evangelists, Messrs. Vacas and Garcia, have been evangelizing in the public laundries of Madrid. Women bring their household washing to these places on Sundays as on other days. While they have been at work, the evangelists have read and expounded to them such passages as the parable of the Prodigal Son and the story of the Samaritan woman's conversation with Christ. The women have been so interested and delighted with their religious instruction that they have attempted to give money to the evangelists which of course has been refused. "No one ever told us such good news before," they say.

There is Still Fire in the Russian Embers. Mr. E. T. Colton of the Y. M. C. A. at Archangel writes that sixty Russian city and country churches have asked him to secure for them typical literature from American churches dealing with Sunday schools, religious education, social service, denominational periodicals and other accessories.

"Men never had greater privileges in the service of the Kingdom than we seventy-five Association secretaries now on the ground."

Last year 900 persons were baptized in the province of Saratov by Mr. V. P. Stepanof, Mr. Golaief and others. The Dom Evangelia Church of Petrograd has still 311 members although famine has driven out of the city most of the others. Their building, requisitioned by the Tsar for barracks, has been returned to them by the revolutionary government.

"We are not persecuted by the present government," writes Mr. Redin. "We hold meetings in parks and in streets, although in general, street meetings have been forbidden for fear of counter-revolution. Several times the Soviets have even given us their halls free of charge."

President Masaryk of the Czecho-Slovak Republic has for years been the intimate friend of the Rev. John S. Porter, missionary of the American Board in Bohemia,—so intimate in fact that when President Masaryk was proscribed and obliged to flee the country, Mr. and Mrs. Porter were placed under police supervision as suspected accomplices. Great days for the Free churches of Bohemia are predicted. Recently when President Masaryk was waited on by a deputation of Roman priests to inquire concerning the status of their church under the new *régime,* he replied:

"Gentlemen, you know I was and am anticlerical. But you will have the same freedom granted to any other denomination,—no more, no less."

Dr. A. W. Clark, another Congregationalist missionary in Prague, was recently accosted on the streets of Boston by a Czecho-Slovak leader with:

"Dr. Clark, I congratulate you upon being a missionary of the American Board. For over a hundred years you missionaries have been planting seeds of democracy all over the earth, and now you see the harvest being gathered in. These must be glad days for you and your associates."

The Dead Sea is now Furrowed with English Steamers transporting supplies to the troops of General Allenby's army.

Arabs, Armenians and Jews Participated in a Meeting representing the oppressed nationalities of the Turkish Empire which was held in the London Opera House some time ago. The orator representing the Arabs referring to his people's Abrahamic origin said:

"Remember, O sons of Isaac, that the children of Ishmael suffer (at the hand of the Turks) as much as you do yourselves."

The Turkish People have proved themselves sterile in every direction, according to M. André Mandelstamm, lecturing at the *Societé de Sociologie de Paris.*

"They have enchained other peoples,—Greeks, Arabs and Armenians, the representatives of an earlier culture. They have put chains on the thought and liberty of their own sons; they have kept in the chains of Islam their own daughters. The impoverished Turkish tongue has failed to serve as medium for scientific thought. The Turkish people have not brought forth a single great new idea. Never has the world caught from Turkish lips an original song or melody; never has the Turk enriched humanity with new forms or images. The Turkish people have left to humanity not one notable name of poet, sculptor, musician, or *savant* that could be repeated with delight. Its sole mission has been one of destruction."

THE MISSION FIELD.

The Koreans Are Moving in Large Masses into Kando in Northern Manchuria, being attracted by the better economic conditions there. Eight years ago there were some 90,000 Koreans in North Kando; to-day at least 233,000. The paying crop of the new country is the white bean, production of which has jumped from 563 *pickles* in 1915 to 60,296 *pickles* in the first four months of 1918. The proportion of Christians emigrating is considerably greater than that of non-Christians and, as a consequence, many churches in Korea are now empty, the whole village having passed into Kando. These Christians are prospering and are far better off than their brethren in Korea. Recently *yen* 30,000 was invested in rice land at Yong Jung, almost entirely by Christians. This prosperity is reflecting itself in increased gifts for church work and greater activity in school work,—there being now thirty-five Christian schools and three academies with a total of 1300 scholars. It is noticed that non-Christian Koreans in Kando are more responsive to new truth and new ideas than those in old Korea. The Rev. W. Scott who is working here urges the establishment of a combination Y. M. C. A. and Immigration office in Yong Jung as a rallying place for incoming Christians and one where names could be recorded.

"With a hotel attached to such a building the incoming non-believer would feel himself in safe hands and, with better mind, open an ear to the Gospel."

Further Information about These Korean Christian Emigrants is given by a correspondent to the *Korean Mission Field:*

"There is every evidence that the interest of these Christians in religion is unabated in the new country. The meetings in the various churches are surprisingly well attended and the members are building or purchasing suitable places of worship and maintaining pastors and helpers. They are eager to secure teachers for their children. In one place the church offered a suitable salary to any girl graduated from a school in Chosen, together with a husband from among the best educated of its young men, if she would only come to teach their girls.

"I found that the Christians hold Bible classes in central meeting places for about ten days at a time as in Korea. I was speaking to a man and said it must be very dull in the winter when the ground was covered with snow and so cold that no outside work could be done. He said, 'No, the winter months are the best months of the year for real pleasure.' I asked how that could be, to which he replied that he attended Bible classes, going from one series to another. I was told that the Chinese are much interested in the Korean Christians who erect their own churches, pay their own pastors and maintain schools for their children. It may be that these scattered Korean Christians who preach where they go will be used to pass on the word of truth to the quiet, conservative Chinese residents who certainly are not irreligious, for under every green tree on the roadside are spirit houses (often made out of Standard Oil boxes) where incense is burned and prayers said. Many Koreans who are not Christians themselves seek out the Christians in Kando for advice and counsel. This says much for the character the Christians have won."

Rapid Expansion of Christian Missions in the Lands Bordering on Uganda is indicated by statistics published in the *Church Missionary Review.* In Ankole work was started in 1900 and the first baptisms occurred in 1902. Taking intervals of five years we have these figures:

	Out-Stations	Baptized
1907	0	456
1912	50	1218
1917	212	5067

In Kavirondo (work having begun in 1904):

	Out-Stations	Baptized
1907	0	0
1912	0	63
1917	72	2398 (with 5706 catechumens)

One of these movements is among Bantu-speaking, the other among a Nilotic-speaking people, each in an area containing a population of over 300,000. They are typical of a movement going on over a wide area in which the mission stations of Mbale, Ng'ora and Gulu are the principal centers.

The Church of Uganda has its own Board of Missions responsible for those parts of the diocese still unevangelized or in which the work of evangelization is in its elementary stages. Further, according to the Bishop of Uganda,

"there is an almost inexhaustible supply of native teachers, trained and untrained, many of whom are doing a notable work in Bukedi and other outlying districts. Herein lies our hope."

In one of the conquered districts of German East Africa, Kiziba, a body of eager volunteers from the Church of Uganda has pressed forward to take advantage of the opportunity. The number of out-stations left by the German missionaries has already more than doubled. Eight boys, sons of Kiziba chiefs, have entered the Mengo High School. A Kiziba Romanist chief has put himself under Anglican instruction. On Christmas Day a congregation of 600 gathered at Bukoba and everywhere a mass movement is in progress which promises great things.

The Criminal Settlement at Kavali (India) was established in 1912 by the Rev. E. Bullard with twenty-five families of Donga Erukalas. In 1917 the roll call showed a population in the Settlement of 1385. The manager is Mr. S. D. Bawden. Mr. Bawden writes that in looking back on his past life he is impressed with the special training for this work which God had been giving him. As chaplain in a reformatory, a position which he held in America for nine years, he met with experiences which have proved invaluable in the discipline and guidance of large numbers of prisoners. A course taken in trigonometrical surveying has proved an indispensable asset in mapping and allotting the thousands of acres given by the Government for the reclamation of these people from a life of dacoity and sin. As a graduate in science and mechanics he has been enabled to direct the engines, well-drilling, quarrying and all the other branches required in promoting the industries in which the members of the Settlement are employed. Finally, the course taken in theology has given him a knowledge of the Scriptures for the religious instruction of his wards.

The Christian Church which has grown up among these former professional thieves now numbers seventy-six baptized members. But the moral influences of Mr. Bawden's leadership are making themselves felt in a far larger circumference. Filth, disorder, murmuring complaints, drunkenness, wife-beating, and idleness are dying out. The homes are tidy and well kept. A school cares for over two hundred children. Those who hold positions of special trust are, with one exception, all Christians. The special constables are chosen from among the settlers themselves. The work carried on at the Settlement is varied: agriculture, building, quarrying stone, woodcutting, weaving. Mr. Bawden has contracts for something like fifty miles of road repairs and others amounting to Rs. 10,000 for masonry in the new Deputy Collector's office building. The expenses incurred in the upkeep of the Settlement are met by the Government with the exception of Mr. Bawden's salary which is paid from the treasury of the American Baptist Mission.

Mission Incidents. Christians can be "candled" quite as effectively as eggs to determine whether they are sound and fresh. Mrs. Terril of the American Methodist Mission in Rhodesia finds the egg test a good one for proving Christian character.

"Heathen natives will not hesitate to bring eggs for sale that have been under a setting hen for almost the full period of time. When you ask if they are fresh the heathen declares in a very emphatic manner that they were all laid yesterday. The candle test or a water test is then applied and the lie detected. Davida is a Christian lad. When he came to live at the Mission he confessed his past with all its paganism, theft and deceit. Lately he had some eggs which he could have sold. They were larger than usual. He had bought them for setting but the hen died the day after. They were still good but Davida refused to sell them for fear that they might be bad. Something has made Davida different from his heathen fellows. What is it?"

A theologically liberal friend of the writer recently congratulated him that missions were now laying emphasis pre-eminently on social work. Well, social work is good and not to be neglected, but is not the regeneration of men and the refining of consciences the chief thing after all?

Mrs. Terril mentions the case of a native Christian woman hired by the Mission who, when she was paid off, came back in great discontent at the fact that she had

been overpaid. She could not write but had tied knots in a string to keep a record of her working days. She had discovered that she had been paid for one day too many and insisted on returning to work out this time.

Bound in Spirit and Body. From the last report of the Presbyterian Mission in Siam we extract the following story:

"A certain man living in a large and prosperous village twenty miles south of Nan was accused by his neighbors of being possessed of an evil spirit. An order was given by the chief official of the district that he should be bound and confined as a man dangerous to the community. His feet were fettered and his hands tied behind his back. A spirit doctor who had already tried to exorcise the spirit without avail diagnosed this particular spirit as one who had charge of the temple of the town and resided in a vacant lot near by, that had grown into a jungle of brush. Some of the villagers undertook to clear off this place for the purpose of planting rice. The spirit doctor claimed that the evil spirit had taken possession of the man out of revenge upon the citizens for this invasion.

"About this time a virulent epidemic of pneumonic grippe broke out in the town. The possessed man became more and more violent, raved and bit and tore his fetters, sometimes getting loose. He required constant watching. He cursed all who came near him. When he learned of any person having taken the disease he would rave and prophesy whether or not they would die and the day of their death. To the amazement and consternation of the people his forecasts to their minds were literally fulfilled. The terror of the people became so great that they would not let him remain longer in the village but took him out to the edge of the forest and built a pen for him, leaving him there alone.

"His ravings continued and the epidemic prevailed until there were several persons dying daily. They were afraid to do any violence to him that would leave a mark on his body for fear the evil spirits would take vengeance. His wife had already secured poison and others talked of binding him between two trees and leaving him for the tigers to take.

"The Finger of God." "About this time one of the Nan traveling evangelists was passing through the district. He and one of the Christians from a neighboring town, Noi Tip, came together in council and prayer and finally decided to visit the man. When the latter saw them approaching he greeted them civilly and cordially and being told that Noi Tip was an evangelist said, 'That is good.' They sat down by him and consoled him telling him about Jesus, the great Physician. He acted as if perfectly sane and said: 'Now I know I shall see Him and not die.' Later an elder of the church and quite a little company returned and held a service of song and prayer. The man was pleased and greatly comforted and begged to be taken out of the pen and allowed to go home with them that he might become a Christian. He was told to be patient until the authorities could be asked for permission.

"When they returned the next morning they found him quiet and eagerly looking for them. They took him out of his vile pen, burst his bonds and brought him to Noi Tip's house where he received tender care. The man's neighbors were still in such terror of him that they would not allow him to pass through their village. Daily instruction was given and eagerly absorbed. Finally the evangelist sent a letter to the missionaries at Nan urging that someone come down and baptize the man. On Sabbath Dr. Peoples preached on Mark v. 20. There was intense interest. All felt that the power of God was as potent to-day to cast out demons as in the days of Christ upon earth. 'If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.'"

Brief Mission Notes. Tibet at Last is to be Open to Christian Missions. Dr. Shelton and his associates at Batang have been invited by the authorities at Lhasa to begin work there in the Sacred Capital, the Mecca of Buddhism. Thus the prayers of many decades have been answered. May a Christian Church in this hermit nation arise of the same robust quality as that of the other once hermit nation, Korea!

The Danish Lutheran Mission in Harbin (Manchuria) reports great blessing from a recent evangelist week. Twenty-eight women and more than three hundred men were enlisted as adherents, some of whom are the most prominent in the town. Most of them are business men and especially many young men from the banks. One presented the church with a generous gift of 150,000 *roubles* for a new building.

One Reason for the Disappearance of Anti-Christian Prejudice in China is, according to a reporter in the *Church Missionary Review,* that the sons and daughters of the first Christians who have now grown up are generally respected both for their

character and abilities and are in many cases holding high positions.

General Feng Hu-siang was brought to Christ by attending some meetings held by Dr. Eddy in Peking four years ago and joined the Methodist Church. In 1917 while stationed at Mienchow in Szechwan he visited the C. M. S. boys' boarding school where his son and two nephews were pupils and also the girls' boarding school, presenting each of the girls with an illustrated, marked New Testament and a copy of "The Pilgrim's Progress." He keeps his men well under control, makes them buy and pay for what they need and encourages them to clean living, himself setting a good example.

Admiral Fang Was Right Hand to General Gordon when the latter's "Ever Victorious Army" overthrew the Tai Ping rebellion of fifty years ago. So drastically and so beneficently did he suppress the overflowing brigandage of his day that the whole countryside in the region of Swatow retains his memory and in many places has set up in his honor stone pillars, later to become objects of superstitious worship.

"His one great blemish," says the Rev. George W. Lewis of Chaoyang in *Missions*, "was his hatred towards Christianity. In almost his last breath he warned his fellow clansmen to keep the foreigners and Christianity out of Pu Ning. For many years there was a general agreement in the Fang family that any of their number that dared to become Christian should be ground to powder."

But with the coming of better understanding the legacy of bitterness left by the old Admiral has been set aside. Last year a chapel was built on land purchased of the Fang family. At the dedication a great-grandson of the Admiral made a speech expressing his friendliness both to Christianity and to the foreigner. Evangelistic services have been held in Pu Ning with considerable audiences and as a consequence fifteen persons have been baptized in a month, seven of whom are clansmen of Admiral Fang.

Three Thousand Big Bricks from the Old Manchu Wall around the forbidden city of Chengtu, West China, have been contributed by the Government for the foundation of a Methodist Church in the city. The people of Chengtu are undertaking to raise $300 towards the superstructure. Influential Chinese in West China have formed an organization to collect 10,000 *strings of cash* (approximately $6000) for the endowment of Methodist schools. The West China Union University within five years has increased its enrollment from 200 to 700,—a gain of 100 pupils yearly.

Moral Conditions in the Centers of Japanese non-Christian Religious Life recall those in papal Rome in the palmy days of the temporal power. Mr. George Gleason of Osaka is responsible for the statement that in his city the number of abandoned women is one to every 130 men; in Yokohama one to every 138. But in Buddhist Kyoto it is one to 109; in the shrine city of Nara one to 55 and at the Shinto place of worship Ise, one to 47. At Tsingtau, China, the city which the Japanese took from the Germans, a licensed quarter is put in the most prominent part of the city and given numbers of the most beautiful homes in proximity to a beautiful park, so that when people want to walk in the cool of the evening they run right into this nest of prostitution and intemperance.

Reports of Christian Activities come from various Japanese schools for girls. One mission school in Yokohama carries on 29 Sunday schools together with meetings in four factories. A small school in Utsunomiya with only 38 students conducts 12 Sunday schools, enrolling over 500 pupils. Another in Yokohama furnishes weekly at least 100 bandages to the American Red Cross. Another in Shidzuoka has all its girls enrolled in a temperance society.

The Quo Vadis Film was exhibited in some twenty places in 1917 through the exertions of a missionary in Japan and in connection with each meeting copies of Yamamuro's tracts were given out,—the numbers distributed running up to many thousands.

Bands of Japanese Christians who will themselves assume the responsibility of evangelizing the country are, in the judgment of the Rev. Harvey Brokaw, the

most feasible undeveloped instrumentality for the present time and situation. This is quite a common feature of Buddhist religious life. Thus a band of 400 Buddhists, all young farmers, pledge themselves to visit all the Buddhist temples in the country, giving a month's time and paying their own expenses. The total effort represents an outlay of 20,000 *yen* and of time equal to thirty-three years. A number of such Christian bands would soon make the Gospel known to all Japan.

Five Buddhist ex-Priests work in connection with the *Galilee Maru,* the little vessel which evangelizes the shores of Lake Biwa, Japan. They are connected with Mr. Vories' Mustard-Seed Mission.

The Ancient Syrian Churches in Southwest India, formerly split into factions and at a low level of spiritual life, have harmonized their divided elements; fighting patriarchs now sit on the same platforms and conventions have been held with 15,000 present. Bible study has been carried on where it was never thought of before, the task of evangelizing the surrounding heathen has been taken up and a Church which was once a laughingstock is now becoming a real force.

Dr. James M. Taylor Has Been Holding Meetings in Quetta in British Baluchistan. At the first of the series the brother of the Khan of Kelat, the largest native state in Baluchistan, sat near the speaker. Next to him was one of the wealthiest wholesale merchants. Other men of position and culture were present. The message so took hold of them that they secured the largest hall in Quetta for Dr. Taylor's next meeting. One Khan was so impressed that he invited the speaker to come to his khanate and bring a missionary with him for permanent work, offering to give of his means to forward the mission. All this is the more remarkable in that these people are bigoted Mohammedans. Nothing of this sort has ever happened before in Baluchistan.

The Salvation Army Mission in India had, in 1909, 100 European missionaries and 2000 Indian workers in some 2000 different villages and towns. In 1918 the number had risen to 280 Europeans and 3236 Indians at work in 3059 centers. Ten years ago there were two Settlements among criminal tribes with 150 inmates; to-day there are 34 Settlements with about 8200 men, women and children. Practically all required for feeding and clothing these people is raised by their own labor and instead of a meager famine ration they now have as good a living as the average villager of India. One Settlement with a population of 1390 souls had an income last year of Rs. 66,000, the sources being rice, ragi, ground nuts, mat making, cattle breeding and coolie work. The Army has imported silkworm eggs from China which have given good results in various parts of India. Its agents have visited some of the principal silk centers in China, Japan, Korea, Manchuria and French Tonquin and from their investigations are convinced that India could easily become one of the great silk-producing countries of the world. They are working towards a rehabilitation of two of India's greatest cottage industries,—silk growing and weaving.

A Leper Asylum Was Opened in 1913 by the American Presbyterian Mission at Chiengmai, Siam, on an island of 160 acres presented for this purpose by the King of Siam. It now shelters 200 lepers. Dr. J. W. McKean, who has it in charge, has recently visited leper institutions in Japan, Korea, China and the Philippines. On his return he directed an appeal to the King of Siam to undertake the systematic segregation of lepers in the country with the end in view of eliminating the disease altogether from Siam. In his statement he calls attention to the fact that this policy is attaining satisfactory results in the Philippines where, during the past eleven years, 11,000 lepers have been segregated and the former increase of 1200 new cases per year reduced to almost none.

In the Death of M. Paul Germond the French Protestant Mission among the Basutos has suffered a severe loss. M. Germond was a devout preacher of the Gospel who belonged by birth and education to that element in Lausanne, Switzerland, that grouped itself around the great personality of Vinet and founded the evangelical Church of the Canton Vaud. Son of the Revival, he always put first in his

thought and teaching redemption by the Cross and individual appropriation of salvation. We are not aware that he talked much about social Christianity but as is usually the case this evangelical was the one to do the practical social work. He understood that it was necessary to construct the outer framework in which the new life could bear fruit freely. So he had much at heart the industrial and agricultural development of the Basutos. At Thabana-Morena he established an industrial school for teaching carpentering, blacksmithing, knitting, weaving, etc.

There is a Church Missionary Society Agricultural School at Ng'ora near Lake Kioga (Uganda) where the boys are especially trained in cotton growing as this is the center of the cotton district. As most of the boys in training are sons of chiefs and leading headmen in the province the bearing of this enterprise upon industrial development in the province is self-evident.

ISAIAH'S MESSAGE TO THE GODLY: THE REPOSE OF A SETTLED FAITH.*

Rev. Harris E. Kirk, D.D.

Thus saith the Lord GOD, *Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone of sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. . . . . In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength. Isa. xxviii. 16; xxx. 15 (R. V.).*

In the last lecture we saw how Isaiah met the crisis which arose in Judah through the fall of Samaria before Sargon. Humanly speaking there was no reason why the Assyrian should not take Jerusalem also; but domestic troubles in Babylon called the king home, and the siege was postponed for twenty years.

Before we take up the interesting series of prophecies concerned with the deliverance of Jerusalem, it seems best to consider how Isaiah dealt with the needs of the godly people in Judah. So far we have been chiefly concerned with the successful advance of Assyria through Palestine, and the ineffective policies of the rulers to check it. We have examined the social and religious life of the people of Judah and have naturally sympathized with the prophet's denunciations. So far our study has been confined to the destructive forces abroad in the land; we have touched but lightly the constructive aspect of the situation. The destructive forces of life are the noisy forces, which justifies Carlyle's remark that "history is the record not of the doings, but of the misdoings of men." Human nature is more interested in destruction than in construction; it is easier to pull down than to build up; and while our study has so far satisfied this Adamic instinct, still a too prolonged reflection on the destructive phases of those times is apt to leave us discouraged. It raises the question: Were all the people of Judah in this evil case? Were there no devout and holy folk there, who while suffering with the guilty yet had no word of consolation or encouragement from the great prophet? We turn to this more attractive side in this lecture.

Isaiah had a band of disciples to whom, in appealing asides and little artless remarks as he goes along, he gave most helpful messages. There will always be found good people in Zion, since God never leaves Himself without witness; and it was due to the presence of devout people in Judah that we have some of the most beautiful and appealing teachings of the prophet.

By way of approach to them let us recall for a moment the three characteristic convictions of the prophet, which determined the character of his message and the consistency of his predictions throughout that terrible time. The first was as to the real nature of the Assyrian advance. Long before the politicians in Judah realized what was coming, Isaiah saw in vision

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the desolation of the land. He had no illusions about the power or purpose of Assyria. Humanly speaking she was irresistible, and he knew in advance that her campaigns would work havoc in the whole region. Secondly, he fully understood that the nations were incapable of successfully meeting the danger. He calls them "stumps of smoking firebrands." Judah was without military or diplomatic leadership, and entirely at the mercy of impressionists who advocated following the line of least resistance. None of their policies fitted the situation, "for the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it." The most dangerous policy of all—that of an allegiance with Egypt, the blustering braggart whose strength was to sit still—was growing in popularity and was destined to lead Judah into a trap from which only the goodness of God could deliver her. On this account Isaiah knew precisely what would happen as soon as Assyria became an actual menace to the Holy City. The nation would collapse before the storm; the human aspect of the case was desperate; and there were many in Zion who fully realized it. It must have been a peculiarly painful thought to the holy remnant, and as the prophet's ministry grew in influence, he devoted increasing attention to this class. Opposed to the hopeless aspect of the case was a third great conviction, that Jerusalem was inviolate, because it was not the Divine intention at this time to abandon her to the ruthless will of the enemy. The times were grave, the nation was to be sifted as wheat, but after destruction Isaiah saw construction at work. The tremendous fires of holiness were already consuming unreality in Assyria and in Judah; but eventually they would reveal the presence of an indestructible element in Zion, a godly people who would pass through the fires as refined gold. The idea of the remnant does not stand for quantity, for the prophet never takes a small view of the spiritual results. It is a word of quality, it stands for God's finest product, and in all the passionate denunciations of the folly of the rulers, he never forgot the needs or temper of this element of godliness in the nation. He cannot of course in advance of events speak his full message to it. Not until the actual deliverance, twenty years later, could he open his mind without reserve; but as the Assyrian advanced with relentless precision over the land, as one after another of the popular measures for meeting the crisis broke down, the prophet found opportunity to speak home to the heart of the spiritual people. His messages were concerned with the inviolability of Jerusalem at that time, and with the advent, be it soon or late, of the great leader whom God had promised to Israel. His Messianic prophecies were shaped up round the faith of the godly remnant. We shall have to consider them eventually, but here our concern is with the first of these great conceptions. Isaiah firmly believed that in spite of all the horrors of that time, Jerusalem could neither be taken nor destroyed. It was the dwelling place of the Holy One; it was the home of the spiritually alert; the time had not yet come to lead them forth on that greater spiritual adventure known as the Babylonian captivity. Still the godly people were well aware of the possibility of dispersion. Was not Samaria even then desolate? Were not the people of northern Israel already scattered abroad in Mesopotamia? And if this were so, might it not happen unto Jerusalem also? And if so, what would become of their spiritual hopes?

Isaiah met this demand in the great declaration of the text. In advance of events and in face of a hopeless human outlook, he preached the inviolability of the Holy City with a confidence born of a great faith; of a faith whose spiritual passion was sustained at all points by profound and reasonable conviction. God had laid in Zion "a chief corner stone, elect, precious." Judah was the chosen of Jehovah; the religious hope of the future had been committed to this small people. The Assyrian who coveted the world as his possession; the Phœnician whose sordid imagination embraced the commercial opportunities of the sea; and Egypt dreaming on her hot Nile sands had all been passed over; and this little insignificant nation had been chosen to deliver the world from spiritual bondage. It has been frequently asserted by Germany in justification of her ruthless treatment of small peoples, that the world

has never gained much from the influence of little nations; yet this is directly contrary to fact: that rare culture which like a volatile essence has spread its sweetness over the whole world, "the glory that was Greece"; that conception of ordered liberty and sound government ever associated with the "grandeur that was Rome"; and that religion, from which came Christianity, —all these constructive forces of civilization came from small nations; while those huge masses of conceit, arrogance and egotism known as mighty empires, are now but piles of archæological débris, the study of whose dusty records affords employment for sleepy old gentlemen who dream away their lives amid the cloistered seclusion of the university campus.

The inviolability of Jerusalem and Judah was based upon the fact that this small people had been entrusted with the world's salvation; therefore, said the prophet, Zion cannot be taken. The other side of this promise was the checking of the Assyrian advance. Somewhere and somehow, Isaiah does not specify, God would stop it: "I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." And on this ground Isaiah made his appeal to the godly remnant. Let them put their trust in this great fact; let them not be dismayed because the rulers had no method of meeting the crisis; the situation was not in their hands, but in God's, and sooner or later He would vindicate them.

It was an unstable time. The feverish preparations, foolish arrangements and abortive remedies of the rulers would avail nothing. Judah was like a silly dove, all fussed and excited; in a word, full of haste and waste. But, says the prophet, "he that believeth shall not make haste." He shall never be fussed nor in a hurry. In returning from all these foolish measures, and in rest upon the promises of God shall ye be saved; "in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." Over and over again he rings the changes on these great words. The godly are urged not to be dismayed by popular clamor; "neither fear ye their fear," said he, "nor trust in their preparations, but put your confidence in the Holy One and He shall deliver you."

The essence of his message was the repose of a settled faith; he urges them to examine their life, to acquaint themselves with their spiritual destiny, to think through the times to a real and abiding peace: In Zion is laid "a chief corner stone, elect, precious:" "he that believeth shall not make haste."

History abundantly fulfilled this prediction. From the middle of the eighth century on, Jerusalem was in the hands of one after another of great world empires—Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome; and although they passed through many and varied experiences, they were able to sustain their spiritual supremacy until they had finished their mission and given Christ to the world. In all the sufferings of those times they could have joined in the song of Ben Ezra:

> "God spoke, and gave us the word to keep:
> Bade never fold the hands nor sleep
> 'Mid the faithless world,—at watch and ward,
> Till Christ at the end relieve our guard."

When Christ came to fulfill the mission of the Jew, the nation was no longer important; but during the stage of preparation for the Lord's coming, this nation after Isaiah's time never lost its spiritual supremacy.

This great hope is not held out to a people who have passed through their trials, but rather to prepare them for endurance of greater trials yet to come. Isaiah plainly tells them that the time is set for a consummation, but the end of it will be righteous peace. The overflowing Assyrian scourge shall give place to an overflowing righteousness; but this deeper experience is possible only through a real knowledge of the character and purposes of God.

We recall Isaiah's fundamental conception of holiness as an active force in life. The unreality of his times appalled him. Assyria was hopelessly unreal, since she did not understand the meaning of her successes. She had set out to overcome the world, but God was using her as an instrument to chastise Judah. She was simply an unintelligent agent in a scheme of vast import. The life of Judah was also unreal, but underneath the accumulated rubbish Isaiah saw something fine and beautiful; a capacity for spiritual experience unsuspected in the Laodicean days

of the long peace. The most hopeful element of society was the godly remnant, the spiritually alert people; but their chief trouble just now was mental distress due to the sufferings and anxieties of the time. Isaiah had laid down the proposition that this long discipline was needed for purging the people of their sins. He pleads with the righteous to have faith in God, but seeks to put behind their faith the clarity and strength of rich and deep conviction. His aim then is not simply to declare a faith, but to propagate it through the medium of great ideas of God. His teaching centered about three conceptions, which the times were illustrating: God is wise, God is austere, God is kind. Let us consider them for they will be found to underlie any valid knowledge of God to-day.

God is wise, but what do we mean by wisdom? It is not the possession of knowledge, but ability to use knowledge for the accomplishment of some practical end. Wisdom is applied knowledge, knowledge that develops according to fixed purposes, and works out its meaning in conscious and intelligible forms of experience. God does not work blindly in the dark; His purposes are discoverable in the operations of nature, in the policies of nations, and in the experiences of the individual. Wisdom is the working out of certain ends constantly and consistently, the holding to a definite course after it ceases to be swift and novel, and becomes commonplace and familiar. The wise man sees his objective, and proceeds to it by the most direct route. It is even so with God.

Wisdom is the easiest quality to attribute to God, but in practice the hardest to believe in. We may readily believe in the orderliness of God as it is displayed in the laws of nature, or advocated by science; but when it comes to its application to the facts and experience of individual life it is very difficult to accept, not because of a lack of evidence, but because man is constitutionally disinclined to live in this sort of a world. We prefer to believe in a haphazard God, in a Deity Who works by fits and starts; and Who touches life only in episodic ways, by signs and wonders and miracles of one sort or another, rather than in the constant, familiar facts of everyday life. We confess our faith in a haphazard Deity whenever we act on the supposition that God can be influenced by ceremonies and ritual performances. The people of Jerusalem were great churchgoers; they offered much praise and sacrifice; but their interest in God was episodic and external. They offered bribes in order that He might overlook their doings. Such a notion of Deity is certain to break down as soon as it meets a first-class test; and when "the Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold," the faith of Judah collapsed. They could see nothing in this but dire disaster, haphazard mischief running loose, and could meet it only with what they called wisdom; some foolish scheme of tribute, or alliance with Egypt or increase of ceremonial. It was this passionate belief in a haphazard Deity that made the rulers of Jerusalem reject Isaiah's advice that salvation was to be found in accepting the hard, commonplace facts of life, rather than in some novel scheme devised by drunken diplomats or time-serving priests.

In face of this Isaiah pressed home upon the intelligence of the time the truth that God also was wise, that He ruled the world according to a plan, that His plans were constant and consistent, and could be understood from the ordinary facts of life.

The old tribal notion of a Deity wedded to a certain people or land had degenerated into a belief that God could be compelled to walk in a path of man's devising. In the case of Judah it was asserted by the hireling prophets that Jehovah must take care of them, since they were His own people, no matter what their life or conduct might be. The Assyrian frankly believed this pernicious doctrine, and acted on the supposition that he was capable of unalterably determining the ways of providence.

It is just possible that many among the devout were influenced by this view; it may have been a formless doubt, an inchoate fear, for the course of events in the successes of Assyria and prostration of the Holy City gave plausibility to such a notion. But to this Isaiah opposed his great conception of order. God's control of the world would be illustrated in the course of time; Judah needed and would receive a wholesome discipline, but she would emerge from the trial a finer and holier

people. Assyria, on the contrary, was the "rod of [His] anger" summoned from Mesopotamia to do a certain work, and when that work was finished, God would discard the instrument of His providence. The terrible flood of visibilities then rolling over Palestine was of God's devising; in His own time He would check it.

Let them see clearly the relation of this visitation to their spiritual hopes; let them rid themselves of groundless fears, break forever with the impressionism of the time, and base their faith squarely upon the fact that God works according to plan. His will is discoverable in experience, it will eventually become manifest in events, and His purposes will certainly be accomplished.

But God is also austere. The hardships of the Assyrian campaign could not be ignored; the innocent suffered with the guilty; righteousness did not give immunity from loss of goods or physical pain: what then could be said of this? If God controls the world according to plan, why is there so much pain in it, and why do the righteous suffer?

This problem was not as acute then as it became later, when the Jew through the Babylonian exile gained an enlarged sense of personal significance; still it was serious enough, and Isaiah met it with the teaching that God's methods must sometimes be painful. Like a lion He had come down on that stupid people who had despised their spiritual privileges; the nation's sins were calling for correction as a parched field begs for rain.

Suffering could offer no problem to the guilty, but it always remained for the godly Israelite a very serious question. Isaiah's teaching is an anticipation of that of our Lord: "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit." We see this strange truth working about us every day. Good people do become better and more fruitful through their afflictions; while the process is going on they are doubtless unaware of its value, but eventually all can see the beneficence of it.

The great goal of this disciplinary experience, according to the prophet, was communion with God in His sacrificial life; that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission. This truth of Atonement could not be learned out of a book; it must be a discovery of experience; if there had been no unmerited sufferings, no long and painful discipline of the soul, there had been no fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. Pain is the greatest quickener of the soul; we are coming to understand the Atonement of Christ in these days, simply because for the first time in our lives we have become aware of the awakening character of sacrifice. Our sons are showing us Christ; without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of anything; and one of the supreme gains of the war will be the proper adjustment of our experience to the Cross of Christ. That is the meaning of God's austerity; the permanent gains of life come to us from our sufferings. We forget our pleasures quickly, but our pains we remember forever, and it was because Isaiah saw God's method working out its wise purposes through pain, that he was able to add the third great truth about Him, namely, that God is not only wise, and austere, but kind. The purpose of all these painful experiences was to bring His children into closer relations with God. Like a mother bird that hovers over Jerusalem—that is the prophet's conception of God's kindness. Suffering was not punishment, neither was it limited to discipline; its goal was communion with the Eternal in the deepest experiences of a spiritual nature. I think this is a very profound truth, for discipline even for the best people is a sorry business unless it begin to yield some fruits; and we must pass through discipline to fellowship of some kind, since what is wanted by the burdened soul is encouragement and companionship. Not suffering, but suffering without explanation, suffering without purpose, is the real problem; once grant that it has a meaning, and is leading to desirable results and one may accept it with contentment; and this is Isaiah's argument, and most beautifully does he illustrate it at the end of the twenty-eighth chapter. The farmer does not always plow; when the ground is ready he plants his seed, and when it comes up he deals with each growth according to its nature. He does not thresh the fitches with a threshing instrument lest he bruise them; neither does he turn a cart wheel over the cummin lest he crush it; but he

beats out the one with a staff and the other with a rod. So is it with God; He too is wonderful and excellent in that sort of knowledge that brings things to pass. "He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

Thus the prophet appealed to the righteous of his day: believe in God because He is good; harmony with His righteous purposes will explain the disciplines of life; and this is his message for the godly of our day.

The outstanding defect of our modern life has been ignorance of God in the domain of the spirit. The scientific conception of nature has given us a very lively sense of God's order in the outside world; but we are still far from understanding His orderliness and consistency when dealing with the affairs of the inner life. We have thought too much of God from the point of view of theory; He was a dogma written in a book, something to be disputed about; or to many He was little more than a tribal Deity, ruling over some small domain of thought or private preference. Many acted upon the assumption that God was interested only in what they wanted done. To some He was a zealot for temperance, or municipal reform, or social service; to others He existed solely for the realization of some national or racial purpose. The supernatural aspect of religion for which the orthodox have contended against a too restricted scientific view of things, has meant little more than a belief in a kind of haphazard God, Who revealed Himself chiefly in the form of interferences with human progress, or touched individual life only in episodic ways. But of His onliness, His tremendous holiness, of that devouring fire of reality which burns about this planet and determines the meaning of individuals, nations and things, we have thought little. Our life had settled down upon its lees, our minds were dull and stale; we measured ourselves by ourselves, and compared ourselves with ourselves, and were unable to obtain an impartial view of our experience. Then came the war, and gradually we have awakened out of our dreams; our souls have been stabbed wide-awake at last by the fresh realization of the monstrous power of evil let loose on the world; we have discovered the essential difference between right and wrong; we have realized that right can be established over wrong only by fighting for it, and if need be dying for it; we have learned that without the shedding of blood there can be the remission of no evil thing; and as we have been willing to offer ourselves for this sacrificial service we have grown in mental and moral stature; we have felt the need of an enlarged conception of God; we felt He was not indifferent to all this; but as the issues of the war have become so clearly sharpened into a struggle between good and evil it has become increasingly clear, not that God must take our side, but that we must take His side.

Who can doubt that understands the present issues at stake but that in the Allied nations God has laid a corner stone, elect, tried and precious; that the spiritual future of mankind is, humanly speaking, dependent upon the triumph of that sort of civilization which German autocracy is trying to destroy? We cannot believe that our cause is going to fail. Germany is doomed, not by what the Allied nations may do to her, but by the essential fact that she is unreal; she cannot maintain her cause in the fire of reality and live. The Allied cause will triumph chiefly because their aims and purposes are in harmony with the purposes of God.

But in working out this great issue, suffering and death, to say nothing of sorrow and discomfort, are possible for all, and necessary, too. We must see method and meaning in this tremendous struggle. This war is not an accident; it is part of a vast plan for human development. Our faith in the future must rest intelligently upon the three great truths, that God is wise, austere and kind. Above all, we must not shrink from the austerity in the present situation; it is the very atmosphere of the clean and noble soul. We must accept our losses in a courageous spirit; we must learn from our pains how to direct our hearts into the deeper intimacies that grow out of communion with God in His sacrificial life; from wisdom which is the world's order, through austerity which is the essence of discipline, we shall pass to the

kindness of God which is the heart's peace; "in returning and rest shall [we] be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be [our] strength." And all our fears shall lose their meaning in the love of God through Christ Jesus our Lord.

ISAIAH'S VINDICATION: THE PROPHECIES OF THE GREAT DELIVERANCE.*

Rev. Harris E. Kirk, D.D.

And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will put a spirit in him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return unto his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land. Isa. xxxvii. 6, 7 (R. V.).

This is the culmination of Isaiah's great career. For forty years he had steadily maintained the inviolability of Jerusalem, and his confidence increased as the deadly menace of Assyria developed into a series of successful campaigns against Palestinian states. Humanly speaking, as early as 721 B. C., when the fall of Samaria brought home to Jerusalem the deadly fear of captivity, there was nothing to prevent the taking of the Holy City. Yet Isaiah did not hesitate to predict the failure of that ambitious scheme. His faith, as we have seen, was not based on human measures, for he had as little confidence in the military ability of his people as he had in the promises of Egypt; neither did he underestimate the power of the enemy. His confidence was based on the faith that God would not permit the captivity of the chosen people at that time because He had committed unto them the spiritual future of the world. In Zion He had laid a "chief corner stone, elect, precious:" whosoever believed in that spiritual fact should neither falter nor fail.

When Sargon captured Samaria in B. C. 722, instead of advancing as he desired to the walls of Jerusalem he was obliged to return home to put down a revolt in Babylon, and the siege of the city was postponed for twenty years. During that period Sargon's successor, Sennacherib, was occupied with this Babylonian business, but he eventually succeeded in suppressing the revolt and in B. C. 701 resumed the western offensive with Egypt as his objective.

During this period of twenty years Judah had rest from war, and the pernicious Egyptian policy which Isaiah had consistently condemned was allowed to ripen and bring forth evil fruit. Egypt, you must remember, knew perfectly well what Assyria was about; she could not meet her in the field and her only hope was to wear down her spirit by keeping her continually involved with the little Palestinian states. While the distance between Assyria and Egypt was only 490 miles it had taken Assyria forty-five years to get to the heart of Palestine, and she was still far from her real objective. Therefore it was highly expedient for Egypt to encourage revolutions in the Palestinian kingdoms, chiefly by promises of aid which was never given.

In the interval of twenty years after Sargon's withdrawal the Philistine city of Ekron, encouraged by Egypt, revolted, withheld its tribute, dethroned the Assyrian vassal king Padi, and sent him in chains to Hezekiah for safe-keeping. This was a cunning Egyptian trick to involve Judah with her powerful enemy, and the result was a foregone conclusion, for in 701 B. C. Sennacherib at the head of a huge army appeared in Palestine, recaptured Ekron, met a small Egyptian army at Eltekeh, defeated it and then turned back to punish Judah for her share in the mischief. He took forty-six walled cities and shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage. The nation was completely prostrated by the turn of events.

The besieging force was a detachment of the main army, and was accompanied

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by a certain civilian chancellor known as the Rabshakeh, a kind of devil's orator. His negotiations with the ambassadors of Jerusalem bring into strong relief the representative views of the situation.

The Rabshakeh was a resourceful rascal, and well he might be, with an army at his back. His speeches betray a considerable acquaintance with the lower aspects of human nature, a fair knowledge too of the world; in fact, he acts and talks like a German, and his demeanor reminds one of the posturing of Von Bethmann-Hollweg at the head of the Prussian legions. He is contemptuous of small nations and despises provincial peoples; he has shrewd insight into character of a certain sort that enables him to pass for a wise man, but of knowledge of the spirit of the people with whom he was dealing he shows not a trace.

He stands there,—this hammer of a man,—with an army at his back, in full view of the people; all about their mud walls they can hear the stammering tongues of a strange and mighty race. The overflowing scourge has at last reached their gates. Was not this what Isaiah had predicted at that memorable dinner party some twenty-five years before: "precept upon precept, ... line upon line, ... here a little, and there a little,"—this monotonous pounding of battering-rams on their defenses, yea, too, upon their weak and fearful hearts?

The Rabshakeh keenly sensed the situation and heightened the effect of his discourse by speaking in the Jews' language over the heads of the ambassadors directly to the panic-stricken folk on the walls; and this is what he says: "Your Egyptian policy is just plain foolishness, for you now know what we can do with her armies. Do you put your trust in Jehovah? Well, how do you think He likes having His sanctuaries removed from the high places, and all His influence concentrated in this insignificant town? Do you suppose He will care to protect you when you have dealt in this manner with Him? Besides, am I not come up against you without His aid? and do you think, if He did not stop me at first, He is going to stop me now?" At this point the cowardly ambassadors besought him not to speak any more in the Jews' language, but rather, in the Syrian tongue for fear of spreading panic in the city. But he replied, with Teutonic effrontery in a louder voice than ever: "You are a contemptible people anyway; there is not much to you, but after all, what is the use of making all this trouble for us? Why not remain quietly here everyone eating his own food and dwelling under his own vine and fig tree until we clean up this Egyptian muddle, and then we will take you back to our glorious country; and you will enjoy the civilizing influence of our *kultur?* What a wonderful thing it will be to become good Assyrians like ourselves! Do not believe what your king tells you about God helping you. You know what we did to other gods; and what happened to Samaria will as surely happen to you if you do not submit to our wishes."

All this would have a remote interest to us if it did not accurately illustrate the temper of Germany in dealing with the small peoples that have stood like stone walls in her path to world dominion. This man talks like a German, reasons like a German, and betrays the same ignorance of the power of a racial spirit to triumph over material suffering, which has characterized German policy in recent years. The Assyrian could not believe that the people of Judah would risk anything so expensive as resistance to his demands, and was not this Germany's notion about Belgium? Why should they risk physical ruin for something so intangible and unmarketable as national honor? Great Britain would not fight for the sake of a mere scrap of paper. America would never come into the war because it would be against her material well-being. This is the low level to which a nation will descend when it stakes everything on brute force and material successes, and overlooks what Germany's evil genius Bismarck called the value of the imponderables. The imponderable thing in this situation was Judah's spiritual destiny, her religious and racial passion, and it was upon this unseen and intangible rock that Assyria broke at last, just as it will be upon the unseen but potent spiritual passion of the Allied peoples that Germany will dash herself to pieces.

But we need not look for this spirit in those craven diplomats who were so fearfully conducting the negotiations. They

frankly confessed themselves without a policy. Perhaps they remembered what Isaiah had been saying of all their wise schemes, or recalled their frenzied optimism when a short while before poor old Padi had been brought in chains to Jerusalem to make a Jewish holiday; and how the whole town went wild with delight, praised their astute diplomacy, and expected the advent of a political millennium. Neither can we look for this spirit in the distressed king. It is true that he was a man of faith; he had refused to yield to Assyria's threats; he was even then prostrate in prayer in the Temple; but he was incapable of meeting the situation and very wisely appealed to the prophet. The text is Isaiah's answer.

Now prophets do not predict events, but eventualities. Isaiah does not tell us when or in what precise manner the Assyrian will come to grief; he plainly says that in God's good time He will turn him back. And while the Rabshakeh was shouting Teutonic blasphemies under the walls of Jerusalem, while the king was stretched out dumb and broken in the house of prayer, God smote the main Assyrian army at Pelusium, on the borders of Egypt, and one morning the watchers on the walls were amazed to note the departure of the besieging force. We need not concern ourselves with the means by which this great disaster was brought about. It is quite significant that Sennacherib said very little about it. He did not even call it a retreat to victory as is the manner of his modern imitators; the fact is, he retired and never came again to curse the land.

At first the inhabitants could not believe it; it was too good to be true; but presently the people found voice and gave vent to their feelings according to their bent. The spiritually minded expressed their view in the 46th Psalm: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Jerusalem after years of stress and strain had become a quiet habitation.

But first impressions are of little value; our interest here is in the vindication of the prophet and the final influence of this great deliverance upon the nation. We shall then be in a position to estimate its value for our time.

Plainly the deliverance of Jerusalem was an act of God, and this event was the direct culmination of the spiritual interpretation of history which characterized Isaiah's long ministry. He had said that God was an active and dynamic righteousness, that men and nations and things lived in an atmosphere of fire; and that ability to live in the fire was the sole test of reality. Assyria was God's ax, the "rod of his anger." So soon as the chastisement of Judah was complete, God would discard the instrument. This great event had transpired according to programme, not because Isaiah was gifted with a magical revelation of the future, but as the direct outcome of spiritual insight which was based upon a real knowledge of God. To know God's nature is to be in a position to say how God's providence will affect history. If God were a consuming fire, and Assyria incapable of living in it, then Assyria was doomed; her term of life was limited to the disciplinary purposes of Jehovah; and the historic vindication of the prophet's ministry was the clear demonstration of the high and unique conception of the onliness, righteousness and universal providence of the Lord of hosts.

This principle is still valid. God has not changed, neither has human nature. We are made of the same old red clay; the same forces are working now as made up the history of the eighth century before Christ; and until God changes or man's constitution is fundamentally altered, history, destiny, national or individual life will be subject to the same laws. That is why I firmly believe that Germany is going to fail. No nation has ever been able to live in the holy fires of God that was not real itself. It may last a long time; it may do immense harm to the moral and spiritual interests of humanity; but in the end it is doomed.

Let us not be impatient with God, nor count His long-suffering as slackness. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." He cannot be hurried, nor do His plans develop prematurely; and the reason is that all historic experiences of the race are designed to make God known; and knowledge both of God and human nature can come only through a prolonged conflict of the good and the evil, of right and wrong,

such as was illustrated in the struggle of Assyria with Judah. Judah gained greatly in knowledge of God through her Assyrian discipline; so shall we in our conflict with the Hun; but whether this knowledge is to be a permanent or temporary gain will depend upon our *receptivity;* and that is the standard by which to test the value of this deliverance to the generation to which Isaiah belonged.

On the ruling classes the chief impression left by the experience was that religion had a place in social and political life. It led to certain reforms; for even the most worldly were disposed to admit that it was a good thing for the nation to have religious people in it. This often happens; social disturbances turn men's thought towards God; political changes set men on fresh quests for peace; but the danger is and always has been that such an interest in religion will be limited to what is expedient. When the Assyrian was far from their gates, the rulers had ridiculed Isaiah's advice on the ground that religion as he understood it had no value for the statesman or diplomat, because it offered no solution for their problems, was in fact mere childishness: precept upon precept, and line upon line; but now that events had vindicated the prophet they were disposed to admit that he was right. It was felt to be a good thing to have Jehovah on their side. Such a position often leads to false security and self-deception; for many will speak well of religion, urge it upon their neighbors, or even apply it superficially to political and social phases of life, without the slightest intention of becoming truly religious themselves.

This superficial interest in religious reform developed a line of cleavage among the people; it afforded a fitting background for the sterling piety of the godly remnant. They were profoundly and gloriously impressed by the turn of events. They saw in religion no temporary expedient for safeguarding a nation's material resources, but an abiding relationship to a holy and gracious God. They had passed through the furnace of affliction with their countrymen, but had come forth refined and purified. They had discovered God afresh; as it had been in former times, so had they seen the Lord's power in the Holy City. It set them to thinking of the loving-kindness of the Lord in the midst of the Temple. In the days of their afflictions they had prayed earnestly for deliverance, and now they realized that it was by great and terrible things that God had answered them. They had learned the painful but salutary truth that God was not conducting the world in the interest of their happiness, but for the satisfaction of their spiritual natures, and that such satisfaction could not be developed apart from pain and sacrifice. They had lost most of their riches, and all their comfortableness, but had grown in mental and moral stature. They had left the nest, but were beginning to love the arena, and they were greatly alive to the spiritual implications of their destiny. They were no longer attaching primary importance to outward events, but found their peace and joy in the deep river of God flowing through their souls. Had Israel been made up solely of such people, there had been no need of further discipline. They were *the reason* why Jerusalem remained inviolate, but unfortunately they composed but a minority as they always do of the people of a given generation.

The majority was subject to a reaction, the first phase of which was fear of God untempered by faith. The sinners in Zion, that is, the careless ones began to reflect upon the solemn meaning of God's destructive providence as it had checked the Assyrian in his headlong course; they felt the heat of that tremendous fire of which Isaiah had preached—that fire of holiness which burned round men and nations and things; and they discovered their liability to its power; the sinners in Zion were afraid, fearfulness surprised the hypocrites and they began to say: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isaiah replied: "Learn to walk uprightly, despise the gain of oppression, have done with the taking of bribes, stop your ears from the hearing of blood and shut your eyes from the seeing of evil, and you shall see the king in his beauty."

You would think that this ought to lead to repentance and true faith, but it never does. It was just a craven fear of unknown forces, an episodic terror that had

overtaken them in their sins; their supreme wish was to get rid of it without changing their life, and being incapable of learning anything from experience a second phase of reaction appeared; they grew weary of outward reforms; Isaiah and Hezekiah died, Manasseh, a man of their own type, came to the throne; they lost their spiritual guides, prophets ceased among them; having nothing left of the great deliverance but unpleasant recollections, they were content to drift; so that in less than fifteen years the nation had lost all its spiritual gains, and fallen into a condition of godlessness worse than before. They even began to admire Assyria's methods, for she had grown rich and prosperous; a deadly calm settled over the world and minds grew stale again and nations settled on their lees. The holy religion had lost its attractions, simply because it was familiar and common, and people wished for something new. Why not adopt the gods of Assyria that had made her so prosperous? Or why not revive the old Canaanite cults with their colorful and sensuous attractions? Along with this passion for idolatry there developed a hatred of the godly and, as George Adam Smith remarks, "the holy remnant became a suffering remnant." The presence of these people in the nation served only to remind the masses of a fear of God they would like to forget, and they varied their interest in heathen practices with the persecution of the saints. The Temple was neglected and fell into ruin, and finally they lost their Bible, and inevitably drifted towards ruin and disaster.

This was the doom of the Hebrew nation, for from that hour of reaction God determined to rid the spiritual remnant of this godless incubus. You see this in the contrast between the prophetic ministries of Isaiah and Jeremiah; one said Jersualem was inviolate because God had laid there a corner stone of exceeding worth, the other that Jerusalem must be taken and destroyed, because God had withdrawn from her. It was Isaiah's mission to preach deliverance, it was Jeremiah's to proclaim captivity. In Jeremiah's time the remnant, not the nation, was the unit of God's thought. Nothing short of national ruin could deliver the spiritual people from this secular curse; and from that time onward the dominant conception was not the Hebrew nation, but the Jewish Church.

God's ways are sometimes strange, always leisurely, but wonderfully effective. History vindicated Jeremiah as it did Isaiah, but it took six hundred years to do it. All that we have as the parent of Christianity came from the remnant of holy Jews that refused to sell its birthright for a mess of pottage, even though it were predestined to share in all the hardships of the long drift of the unbelieving nation towards extinction.

The lesson for America here is this: that no nation, not even when it has been blessed and used of God in the fulfilment of His purposes, is immortal. A nation is just a containing vessel. The pathway of the race is littered with these discarded containers: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Rome, Judæa. What gave the containing vessel long life was the spirit of a people within it which never forgot that the thing inside was more important than the vessel itself. Archæology is the study of discarded containers; history is the scrutiny of the spirit that gave them importance. A nation has no more permanence than the human body; the spirit of a people is the essential element in durability.

We must accustom ourselves to thinking of our nation in this way. There can be little doubt just now but that the spiritual future of the race, as it is outlined in Christianity, depends in great measure upon the continuance of the kind of civilization represented by the Allied nations. The spiritual future of the world is lost if German ideals should prevail. The great struggle is on between the machine and the mind; between material efficiency and spiritual reality. It is a glorious opportunity for our nation to be engaged in this supreme effort to free the peoples of the earth; but it is an opportunity, the value of which to our nation will depend upon ourselves. If our nation is to triumph it will be because we determine to make it so. It will depend upon the spirit of the people, and not upon any necessary durability in the containing vessel.

If we are to accomplish this we must rid ourselves of two delusions which are just now quite popular in the impression-

istic preaching of the time. One is that a nation that passes through a period of trial such as the present must necessarily become a better nation. This assumes of course that spiritual effects follow from material causes. But this is contrary to history. Spiritual fruits grow only from a spiritual stock. The degeneration of the Hebrew nation after the deliverance of Jerusalem ought to convince us that this pleasant supposition is a dangerous delusion. If our nation is to come out of this war a cleaner, more spiritual nation, and these are elements of vital importance to durability, it will be because we are determined to accept the spiritual responsibilities which are now our finest opportunities. Another popular delusion which we must rid ourselves of, is that because a cause is righteous it must be easy of realization. But righteousness has never had an easy time of it. If righteousness is to prevail, we must help it to prevail. It must have our approval, and our vote, and we must be willing to suffer for it and if need be die for it. That is the glorious aspect of the present dedication of our nation to the winning of the war. But the fruits that will last are quite intangible, and to many are rather remote just now from the more visible aspects of the case. We are fighting in an atmosphere of holiness; and if unrighteousness is to prove the destruction of Prussian autocracy it will be because Germany cannot live in the fire; *but the supreme question for us to decide is whether we can.* Are we capable of understanding and choosing spiritual reality? That depends at bottom upon whether the people of the nation are in sympathy with the holy purposes of God.

I see three things in the present national temper that may deprive us of the finest fruits of this struggle. First is the danger of confusing religious impressionism with a genuine spiritual change. We are at present greatly aroused religiously, but is it anything more than a feeling that it is a highly expedient thing to have religion in the nation at such a time? We are fighting for righteousness among the nations, but are we determined to be righteous ourselves? Unless we make these impressions vital for conduct and while the heart is tender and receptive determine fully to yield ourselves to God, we shall lose our opportunity and the effect of our discipline will be lost.

The second is the ever present danger of reaction. The times have put fear into many hearts, but it is not the constant fear of a God Who is being progressively known and loved, so much as the episodic terror of suddenly unmasked, unknown forces, roused by the realization of the monstrous power of evil let loose in the world, and of our need to summon all our resources to check and overcome it. It is the fear of man, of the hardships of war, of the unimaginable possibilities for ourselves; the fear, too, of the vast social changes that must issue from the war; of labor troubles and commercial rivalries and readjustments, and sometimes, too, a dim sense of those awful fires that are sweeping through the world, the fear of an unknown holiness and of the inchoate anxieties which assault the mind in its thoughtful moods. It is a terribly uncomfortable world that we are living in just now, and the contemplation of the future offers little solace. This sense of undefined fear tempts us to rid ourselves of it, to seek a forgetfulness tempered by ritual performances.

There are some who think that the only way we can safeguard our civilization is to adopt the German method of State organization. No matter how thoroughly she may be defeated, Germany will remain for generations a menace to our peace of mind. We are going to be tempted to overestimate her methods of social organization; we shall not lack advocates of a strong militarism. But we should consider just what Germany's method does for her subjects: it makes men into things, because she deliberately uses all the resources of mind to perfect her autocratic machine. This conception of State organization is absolutely opposed to the free spirit of initiative upon which our social order is based. Men trained in universities organized on a German model will be tempted to say that if we expect to stand up against the German State we must adopt the German plan. It is unthinkable. The Teuton yoke can never be imposed on the neck of the Anglo-Saxon.

But what have we to put in its place? If we are to trust government to the free

spirit of a people, to what shall we look for sanctions and upon what depend for obedience to established law? Lack of respect for authority has always been the chief defect of democracies, and it will become the supreme problem of our nation after the war. We may quickly forget the effects of the present war-time discipline, but long remember our rights and our selfish opportunities. It is right to make the world safe for democracy, but who is to make democracy safe for the world? What is to save democracy from itself? There must be in our nation a people not only determined to resist all tendencies to bind upon them political institutions incompatible with their free spirit, but also keenly alive to the necessity of providing a sanction for government and a respect for law, without which democracy is self-destructive. "Where there is no vision, the people perish:" they perish because they cast off restraint. This is essentially a religious problem, for where there is no belief in God sufficiently strong to influence conduct, the people find it impossible to resist the destructive influences of their unregulated desires. It was the failure of a religious sanction in Judah that exposed her to reactionary influences and finally led to her ruin.

A third danger is that the very people who are responsible for religion in the nation do not seem to realize their duty. Some are too much taken up with a false apocalyptic, the end of the world and the last times; and trying to live at loose ends with public duty. This is not only a weak position to assume, but it is highly reprehensible. Christ said of the Christian that he was the light of this world and the salt of this earth, and not of some cloud-capped heaven, where there is an abundance of both salt and light. We must assume the bolder attitude and frankly accept the responsibilities of the present hour. It is our duty to increase the spiritual power of the world, and the supreme mission of the Church is to compel the world to believe in the primacy of spiritual men. Our task is twofold: First, to consecrate the industrial democracy that is coming out of the war to spiritual ends, to help it to become the servant of Christianity, a tremendous task truly, but one worthy of all acceptance. We must furnish the nation with spiritual sanctions for authority and obedience to established law, so that the sense of duty to the State may keep abreast of the social passions of the time. Secondly, we must find the motive power to accomplish this in a fresh realization of the holiness, and graciousness of our Lord and Saviour.

EDITOR'S CORRESPONDENCE.

Ewing Christian College,
Allahabad, India,
Sept. 9, 1918.

Dear Mr. Moody:

It is a long time since I wrote of the Lord's work given to us to do here on the farm. During this period of world shortage we are doing our best to increase the supply of food grains, fibers and oil seeds which are essential to the Allies. India with its enormous agricultural population is capable of a greater immediate response than any other country on earth. Not only has India the agricultural population to help to feed and clothe the world, but she has the climate and the fertile soil. All she needs is demonstration and leadership, and to this the Government is now awake. During the last few years the results of agricultural research have given India new and improved varieties of wheat, cotton, sugar cane, rice, jute, millet, sorghum, indigo. We are helping to introduce these to large tracts of country that knew them not, and it is not only going to help the Indian cultivator, but it is going to give a large surplus for use in Europe as soon as shipping is available.

On the mission farm Professor Bembower is supplying the British troops stationed here with about six hundred pounds of fresh vegetables a day, grown under sanitary conditions, and this, as anyone familiar with the Orient knows, is worth while.

Mr. Griffin is trying to get material with which to put out his improved plow in large quantities. This plow is a wonderful thing for India. It meets the condi-

tions demanded by the ignorance, poverty and backwardness of the Indian farmer. It can be drawn by the undersized, badly fed village oxen. It can be repaired by the village blacksmith. It is cheap, it is lasting. Its adjustments are such as the Indian cultivator is familiar with. It turns the furrow five or six inches deep and about the same width. This plow enables the Indian farmer to plow ground much harder than he can scratch with his wooden plow. It is hard to realize all this plow will mean to India and it is well to remember that it is the gift of Christian Missions to India.

We have more students than ever this year, and have refused many for whom we had neither financial assistance nor accommodation. We have half a dozen Indian Y. M. C. A. secretaries, who before going into rural work are being given training in agriculture and coöperation. These men will go out as the Demonstrator went out into the Southern States of America. An old gentleman recently applied for admission for himself and his grandson. They would join the freshman class together.

Our new buildings go slowly. The first floor of the John H. Converse Memorial Dormitory is now occupied with students, and I do not know what we would do without it. The new dairy building is under construction. Thus far our laboratory, so necessary for our work, remains beyond our financial reach. I hope it will soon be possible to begin building. Several friends have sent contributions towards it.

All the early part of the monsoon period we had a bad famine scare. The rains held off so long that plans were being framed for caring for the most widespread famine of modern times. However, seven weeks late, the rain came to all but a few sections, and so there will be fodder, but much rice and millet, upon which the poorer folk live, has been entirely lost this year. In Northern Gwalior, with a cattle population of two and a half millions, we estimated it would take thirty million dollars to save the best of the cattle; no provision could be made for the rest. The good rains have saved practically all, but the loss of grain is serious for the poor folk. Just what this rain means to India and to the world at this time is hard to calculate. The lack of it would have meant that all the surplus resources of India, which are now pouring into various Eastern theaters of war, would have been needed here in India and would have constituted a very great extra burden on the shipping of the West.

In spite of the short and badly distributed rains and the almost total failure of the rainy weather crops over this part of India, we on the mission farm, with our deep plowing and conservation of moisture and selection of varieties, have been able to sow our seed and watch it germinate and grow. It now looks as though our harvest would be a month later than last year but it will fill all our silos and give us a good return to our labor. If we could introduce American methods all over India, it would enable the poor Indian cultivator to be freed from the despotism of circumstances and remove from him the constant terror of famine, which now hangs always over him.

The Leper Asylum is fuller than ever. The Lepers' "war-gardens" are not only a delight to the eye but a source of much wholesome food to the lepers. We have been fortunate in getting hold of an active young Indian Christian doctor who cares for the lepers in excellent fashion. He is giving injections of Sir Leonard Rogers' chaulmaugra oil extraction to forty-two lepers and already the improvement in some cases is most marked. We are hoping for many cures. Yesterday one leper was ordained to the eldership of the church. Several were baptized. In addition to their regular Sunday collections, they have collected a special war fund of Rs. 100. Again do I marvel at the self-sacrifice of these sufferers, whose own troubles seem to make them more sympathetic than folk who are well and strong.

My wife's dispensary cares for fifty to sixty women and children daily, and is helping much to unveil Christ.

We need your prayers and help to take advantage of the great opportunities that confront us.

With all best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely,

SAM HIGGINBOTTOM.

Receipts for December.

Armenian War Sufferers (Relief for):

13411	$ 1 00
13422	4 00
13431	5 00
	$ 10 00

Labrador (Dr. Grenfell's Work in):

13436	$ 5 00

New Hebrides (Mr. Paton's Work in):

13426	$ 25 00

Record of Christian Work (Free Distribution):

13408	$ 1 00
13409	51
13410	8 00
13412	1 00
13413	2 00
13414	25
13415	25
13416	50
13417	5 00
13418	2 00
13419	2 00
13420	2 00
13421	1 00
13422	2 00
13423	1 00
13424	1 00
13425	6 00
13427	1 00
13428	10 00
13429	10 00
13430	1 60
13432	1 37
13433	5 00
13434	25
13435	2 00
13437	1 00
13438	50
13439	40
	$ 68 63

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Our Book Table.

American Girl and Her Community (The). By Margaret Slattery. Pilgrim Press, Boston. Board. 170 pages. $1.25.

The challenge of the last sentence is the spirit of the whole subject: "The community dare not fail this new American girl." With the discussion of what is the American girl, showing her in her varied types, the questions of "What shall we do *with* her? What can we do *for* her?" must be definitely answered, and this is done as follows: "If we are to serve her effectively we must do it *together*. The responsibility for her future depends not upon *one* but upon *all*." And so the analysis proceeds. First the community is considered—the home, church, town—What must they do for her? Then the different kinds of life the girl leads: the girl in the country, the suburbs, the city, in business, at school, at home—all these groups mean new problems and a different answer in meeting them. What the girls themselves think they should receive from America and give to America are illuminating points and lead to the chapter on the "New American Girl" with her new vision of service. "And the community? The community dare not fail this new American girl."—*D.*

Bible in Our Modern World (The). By F. M. Sheldon. Pilgrim Press, Boston. Cloth. 53 pages. 35 cents net.

This is a book designed to show how we may conserve vital Christian truth in the light of modern scientific knowledge. Much of the book is suggestive, but we cannot but feel that its views of inspiration are not on as high a plane as the Bible itself demands. The author states that "the Bible nowhere claims to be wholly inspired," which is a statement dangerous to untrained minds. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," the Word tells us. The author also says, "It makes no difference whether or not our Bible is infallible and we may come to it freely seeking the whole truth about it." Who shall decide the whole truth about it? Evidently every reader. This is a dangerous theory and would soon rob the Bible of any authority. He objects to a literal interpretation of the Bible and then literally interprets some Old Testament teachings in direct contradiction to his theory. We are told this is a book to help the young in the study of the Bible; it will, rather, confuse the young on many points.—*J. H. C.*

Breath in the Winds (The), and Other Sermons. By Frederick F. Shannon. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Cloth. 173 pages. $1 net.

The writer has not yet had the pleasure of hearing the pastor of the Reformed Church-on-the-Heights, of Brooklyn; but this volume convinces him that thereby there is a treat in store for him. For one cannot read these rushing, lively, and often scintillating sentences without wishing that they could be heard from the lips of their author.

At the same time, however, the book is put down with the rising of the unbidden reflection that, after all, few sermons can survive print. For often it is true that the very qualities which have made them so successful as sermons become defects when they are put into print. That is, great speeches are seldom great literature. And it remains true unto this hour that a sermon is, above all things else, a spoken message.

It is in accord with this principle that a competent and sympathetic critic of Beecher reminds his readers that the great preacher's productions were all composed to be heard rather than read. Now and then what are real faults from a rhetorical standpoint, whether the utterance is to be read or heard, appear instantly in cold type though when spoken they may have seemed but a strong way of putting the matter. As, for instance, on page 27 of this book it is said, " 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.' This is one of the categorical imperatives, one of the absolute impossibles." We can imagine the convincing effect of that utterance, delivered with force and conviction. But in print it is obviously anything but a strong statement; especially does it appear so to one who has just before been reading (as was the fortune of this reviewer) an essay by Mr. Arthur Balfour.

But these sermons are good sermons. One commendable characteristic which they possess is that in them appears always the Cross of Christ; and it seems to belong where it appears. Evidently Dr. Shannon believes that however the taste of an age should be catered to as to the form of a sermon, the message of it should always be that which it was at the beginning, even the Gospel.—*W. O. S.*

It Happened "Over There." By Burris A. Jenkins. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Illustrated. Cloth. 192 pages. $1.25 net.

Writers of fiction, in their search for new plots and a new environment for their heroes and heroines, are evidently finding in the War the opportunity for novelty and a fresh outlook. Dr. Jenkins, the author of "Facing the Hindenburg Line," has utilized air-raids, submarine attacks, Red Triangle work, munition factories, a trans-Atlantic voyage, instances of heroism and of

"frightfulness," to make the lively setting for the love story of a Lady of the English nobility and an Irish-American aviator. It is a good story in several senses of the word. It is a sad comment upon the awful times so recently come to an end that the most tragic episodes of the book do not exceed the actualities of the World War. It is well that we should not forget them too soon.—*L. M. N.*

Joy Maker (The). By A. Eugene Bartlett, D. D. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Cloth. 88 pages. $1 net.

Dr. Bartlett seems to be a Professor in the University of Good Cheer and his text-book is entitled "The Joy Maker." It contains a brief and vivacious lecture on the art of happiness for every week in the year. Those who matriculate in this course for the modest sum of two cents a lesson are guaranteed a lifetime of mental and spiritual sunshine. Happily, the guarantees are based upon the one Foundation that "standeth sure."

The philosophy of these essays of good cheer is sweet and sound and insistent. Their author is an incorrigible optimist, because he has learned the secret of enduring happiness. "The Master revealed it and those who have accepted His offer have entered in and been blessed. When the world has learned to love, it will have found the happiness it seeks!"

The origin of the title of the book is interesting: "Far away in the mysterious Southwest, in the heart of little-known America, the Joy Maker is a recognized official of the government. The Taos Indians duly elect and give prerogatives of office to a young man of the tribe who is known as the Joy Maker. It is his business, and that of those associated with him, to greet the dawn of day with songs. They are charged with the solemn responsibility of preparing the townsfolk for a day of happiness. If smiles are not the order of the day, if success does not crown the efforts of the hours, then the Joy Maker has failed in his great task and sooner or later will lose his high office."—*L. M. N.*

Lord God of Elijah (The). By David Heagle, Ph. D., D. D. German Literary Board, Burlington, Iowa. Cloth. 68 pages. 40 cents net.

This little book is a thesis on the doctrine of the Transcendence of God. It is a timely work to counteract much of the teaching of to-day that would eliminate a sovereign ruling God of all. It treats briefly the theories opposed to God's transcendence and then presents the proofs of the doctrine from Scripture, philosophy, human needs, Creation, Divine providence, miracles, revelation and answered prayer, and from these the author establishes his thesis. His argument from philosophy is perhaps the weakest while the arguments from the other standpoints are particularly appealing. The author very ably shows the weakness of Christian Science towards this particular doctrine. It is an inspiring and helpful book.—*J. H. C.*

Many Sided David (The). By Philip E. Howard. Association Press, New York. Leatherette. 145 pages. 60 cents.

This little volume is one in the "Every Day Life Series" and is a most helpful study of the life of David topically considered. There is a passage for each day with a short exposition and at the close of the week's study there is a chapter of comments on the lesson. A definite theme is considered each week. The whole series of studies is pervaded by a warm, spiritual atmosphere, suggestive and illuminating on our many daily experiences. It is a book that will prove most helpful and it is to be highly commended for the deepening of the spiritual life.—*J. H. C.*

Moral Meaning of the War (The). Edited by Samuel Zane Batten. American Baptist Publication Society, Philadelphia. Board. 112 pages. 25 cents net.

This is a collection of sermons by seven prominent ministers of the Northern Baptist Convention, representing practically every section of the country, since one of them, Dr. Carter Helm Jones, is, though a pastor in Philadelphia, a Southerner of Southerners, and has behind him a distinguished ministry in his native section.

They are excellent specimens of this kind of preaching, and are surcharged with a deep earnestness, which cannot use the superficial motives which so often tempt the speaker whose object is merely to arouse patriotic fervor. The authors are burdened and inspired by the universal character of the issues, as well as by the world-wide extent of the conflict. The collection is really a call to the Christian citizenship of the United States, and a vindication of that call.—*W. O. S.*

New Testament (The). Translated and arranged by Charles Foster Kent. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Cloth. 299 pages. $1 net.

Professor Kent here gives a New Testament that is good English as well as modern. In this respect his work is far superior to other translations of the New Testament into so-called twentieth-century English.

The novel feature of the work consists in the omission of all repetitions in the narrative of the various Gospels. We have here a straightaway story of the life of Jesus and the writings and doings of His disciples. The work is well done and we think it was well worth doing.—*H. P.*

Old Truths and New Facts. By Charles E. Jefferson, D. D. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Cloth. 223 pages. $1.25 net.

Dr. Jefferson never wrote better than to-day. His last book always seems his best book. We cannot speak too highly of these chapters, which deal with the influence of the war on the great doctrines of the Christian Church, including the tremendous influence the war has exerted and will exert over the Christian Church itself.

This is a book to be purchased at once, pondered for long, and kept always.—*H. P.*

Oregon Missions (The). By James W. Bashford. Abingdon Press, New York. Map. Cloth. 311 pages. $1.25 net.

The production of this volume is an illustration of the gradual growth of an interest in the mind of its author, who many years ago, happening to meet some relatives of Cyrus Shepard, a member of the first group of missionaries to Oregon, felt greatly stirred by the story of the Methodist Episcopal Church in that region, began an investigation of the "Oregon question," and ever since has been gathering materials for its critical study. The result is a book full of interesting incidents, with many facts given which are not elsewhere readily accessible, and containing, on the whole, fair and unbiased judgments on the men and events involved in that remarkable chapter of history. The aim of the book in particular is to portray the deeds which determined the boundary line between Great Britain and the United States from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. The volume closes with an eloquent prophecy of the expanding future of the

Western Coast. "Will not some spiritual descendant of Mrs. Hemans arise," asks Bishop Bashford, "to sing of the second Pilgrim Band who left home, not for freedom to worship God themselves, but to carry light to those who sat in darkness, and who, while struggling to save a dying race, marvelously helped their own?" The freshest feature of this book is its rebate on what the author considers the "exaggerated claims originally made" in behalf of the services of Dr. Whitman—to whom, however, he pays a hearty tribute of respect. The reading of this heroic story suggests to us two reflections: What have men dared! What hath God wrought!—*C. A. S. D.*

Religion of Israel (The). By George A. Barton, Ph. D., LL. D. Macmillan Co., New York. Cloth. 289 pages.

Believing that the history of God's revelation has two sides, so that it can be described either as God's disclosure of Himself or as man's growing understanding of God, Dr. Barton has undertaken to show the latter of the two. The result is a careful statement of what is commonly known as the higher criticism. The book sets forth Israel's religious history as it is supposed to have been really experienced. It avoids better than most books of its class the appearance of skeptical superiority to the Bible literature. It is particularly strong in stating the grounds for its conclusions neither as fancies nor as dogmas, although the author does not take up here the reasons for recognizing four great strains of tradition and literature in the earlier books of the Bible. The book will speak an unknown tongue to some; while to others it will be an introduction to a new discovery of God's ways of dealing with men.—*J. L. K.*

Sister of a Certain Soldier (The). By Stephen J. Maher. Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor Co., New Haven, Conn. Paper. 48 pages. 25 cents net.

"We are fighting, we say, for the freedom of the human race; for the rights of feeble folk; for the little nations, the helpless groups, those whom the ruthless strong would exploit. We ask no compensation but the achievement of a wider justice for mankind." So starts a paragraph in "The Path of Labor" on the negro question. Perhaps we do not realize what place the negro is taking in this war, the sterling characteristics, and the service he is rendering to the country. We could do well to study this subject and lend ourselves toward the "achievement of a wider justice for mankind" in relation to the negro.

To understand more concretely the place and opportunity of the "colored" person, this little book is enlightening. It is a war story and a personal experience, but underneath the fiction there is a lesson and message for every reader. The purpose is evident and the book should have a wide circulation.—*D.*

Soldier Silhouettes on Our Front. By William L. Stidger. Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York. Illustrated. Cloth. 209 pages. $1.25 net.

This fresh account of the experiences of a Y. M. C. A. worker with the American forces on the Western front will be eagerly read by those of us who must wait and watch over here. And they will be especially welcome because they are written by one who has not only been a "Y" man, but who is also an "honest-to-goodness preacher," as one poor boy, wounded unto death, called him, with deep appreciation of the fact.

The contents of the book are just what their author says they are, "a heart picture." There is no theorizing, nor speculation, but the direct narrative of things seen and experienced by the writer himself. The evident straining after alliteration in the titles is a regrettable piece of bad taste, which is only the more noticeable because of the essential excellence of the book itself.—*W. O. S.*

Tarbell's Teachers' Guide to the International Sunday School Lessons for 1919. By Martha Tarbell, Ph. D. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Illustrated. Cloth. 464 pages. $1.25 net.

This, the fourteenth volume, exhibits the usual excellences of the series to which it belongs. The author has shown untiring industry in accumulating illustrative material, to aid the teacher in linking the lesson story with the life of to-day. The selections are of high quality and from the best sources. Each lesson has some brief exegetical comment and a sketch of its historical and geographical background and then follows its adaptation to the several grades of pupils to be instructed. The pictures are negligible.

The first quarter is devoted to Exodus and Joshua, the fourth to studies in the lives of Peter and John, while the second and third relate to "Some Great Teachings of the Bible." Dr. Tarbell's work will be found especially helpful in the second and third quarters.—*L. M. N.*

Through the Bible Day by Day. Judges to 2 Chronicles. Vol. II. By Rev. F. B. Meyer. American Sunday School Union, Philadelphia. Cloth. 249 pages. 50 cents net.

This little volume covers from Judges to 2 Chronicles, containing passages and comments for each day's reading.

Each book is preceded by an outline of the book to be studied and at its close there is a series of questions on the study so that one may, if he wishes, test how much actual Biblical knowledge he has secured in his reading. This book is on the high spiritual plane of the previous works of Dr. Meyer and is searching in its questions and inspirational in its teachings of the higher life. It draws many practical lessons from a portion of the Bible little read and known and shows how modern and needed are these Old Testament lessons. It throws a flood of light on many of the dark landings of human life. It is a book to be highly commended and is most acceptable for use in family or private devotions. —*J. H. C.*

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Apostles' Creed in the Twentieth Century (The). By Ferdinand S. Schenck, D. D., LL. D. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Cloth. 212 pages. $1.25 net.

Christian Approach to Islam (The). By James L. Barton, D. D., LL. D. The Pilgrim Press, Boston. Illustrated. 316 pages. $2.

Crossing Over: A Study of Death and the Future Life. By Alpheus H. Holloway, D. D. The Pilgrim Press, Boston. Paper. 56 pages. 50 cents.

Crowded Inn (The). By John McGaw Foster. The Pilgrim Press, Boston. Board. 21 pages. 50 cents.

Democratic Movement in Asia (The). By Tyler Dennett. Association Press, New York. Illustrated. Cloth. 252 pages. $1.50.

Did Moses Know? By C. E. Putnam. The Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. Paper. 40 pages. 25 cents net.

He That is Spiritual. By Lewis Sperry Chafer. Publication Office "Our Hope," New York. Cloth. 151 pages. 75 cents net.

History of Religions (The). By E. Washburn Hopkins, Ph. D., LL. D. The Macmillan Co., New York. 624 pages. $3.

My Galahad of the Trenches. By Lieut. Vinton A. Dearing. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Illustrated. Board. 96 pages.

Suffering of the Best (The), Or, Service and Sacrifice. By John Adams, B. D. Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York. Paper. 163 pages.

Unrecognized Christ (The). By John Gardner, D. D. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Cloth. 158 pages. $1 net.

War and the Bible (The). By H. G. Enelow. The Macmillan Co., New York. Board. 115 pages. 60 cents.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE.

Miss A. W. Pierson.

All communications referring to this department should be sent to Miss A. W. Pierson, 10 Elston Road, Upper Montclair, N. J. Those desiring to enter this course should read the Foreword in the January issue.

Bible Folk Who Dared.

Scripture to be Read.

Genesis xv. 1-6; xxiv.

Questions to be Answered.

1. What was the name of this servant? How long had he lived with his master?
2. Who would have been heir to his master's wealth if God had not given him a son in his old age?
3. What Bible promise is fulfilled in Gen. xxiv. 15?
4. Give three characteristics of this servant.
5. What lessons can we learn from this story?

Subject for Meditation.

Am I as trustworthy to do God's errands as this servant was to do his master's?

The Servant Who Dared to Choose a Wife for His Master's Son.

An old man, lonely and sad because of the death of his wife, sat in his tent thinking, and the object of his thoughts was his son, a young man who could be seen meditating in a field near by. Ever since his mother's death this son had been silent, sad, and lonely. He felt his loss keenly and his father seemed unable to comfort him. The old man was wishing his son had a loving wife to comfort and cheer him, but the women among whom they lived were foreigners, and he could not bear to think of his son's marrying one of them for fear she would bring discord instead of harmony and might turn his heart away from the one true God.

As he saw his son walking further from the tent he clapped his hands and immediately his chief servant, a most trusted steward and friend, appeared. Bowing before him the servant looked into his master's eyes to know his will, for he loved him and hated to see him so sad and broken.

The old man took him into his confidence and to him entrusted a most important errand, which was to find a wife for the beloved son and bring her to him. He made the servant swear that he would not bring one of the foreign women from near by, but he was to go to his master's old home and get a wife from among his relations. Naturally the servant demurred at such an errand. The place was four hundred miles away, and that would mean more than a month's journey each way, amid perils of robbers and of unfriendly tribes. He would need much provision and a band of armed men. "Then, too," he said, "suppose I find your kinsman, and a suitable wife for your son from his family, she would not leave her father's house and go with a stranger to marry a man she had never seen. Couldn't I take your son with me to pick out his own wife?" The old man shook his head decidedly, and made his servant promise before God that he would never take the son to that far-away land where he might be persuaded to settle down for life. The master assured his servant that God would go before and guide him, and all would be well. So the servant prepared for his long journey, taking ten camels loaded with provisions and treasures of gold and silver and beautiful garments for the prospective bride.

We would like to follow the caravan on its journey and know all that befell them, but suffice it to say that after many weary days of travel they finally reached the outskirts of the village to which they had been directed by their master. There, beside the well where the women of the place came to draw water, the servant and his men halted and made the camels kneel to rest. Then the servant himself knelt before the God of his master and earnestly prayed for His guidance and help in his

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ELIEZER AND REBEKAH.

difficult errand. He asked that the woman of God's choice might be sent to the well, and that, when he asked her for a drink of water, she might reply in a certain way so that he would know at once whether she was the right one. Before he had finished his prayer a beautiful maiden came to the well with a pitcher gracefully poised upon her shoulder. Bowing before her he asked for a drink, and she quickly let down the pitcher for him and then said exactly the words he had prayed she might use if she were God's choice. Upon inquiry he found that she was of the family of his master, and as soon as he heard this he lifted up his voice in thanksgiving to God for having so quickly answered his prayer.

The maiden invited him to go to her father's house and lodge, and after presenting her with a golden earring and bracelets, he went with her. When he reached the house he was warmly welcomed and invited to dine, but he refused to do so until he had explained to them the reason for his long journey. Then he told them of his master Abraham, what a good man he was and how God had blessed and prospered him, and how he had one son and heir for whom he desired a suitable wife from among his own people. Then he gave an account of his long journey, his prayer to God and its immediate answer. He then asked them if they would let the maiden Rebekah go back with him to be wife to his master's son. They replied that as God had sent and prospered and guided him they could not refuse. After he had eaten, the servant unloaded the camels and gave Rebekah jewels and beautiful clothing and presents and also gave presents to each of the family.

The servant wished to start back to his master at once the next morning and take Rebekah with him, but her parents did not want to let her go so soon and asked that she be allowed to remain a year, or at least ten months. The servant, however,

did not like to return without her and earnestly urged that they be allowed to go without delay. Upon calling the maiden and asking her she replied, "I will go." So they gave her some slaves to wait upon her and let her go. It appears like a brave thing for her to do, but when one can clearly see God's hand in a thing, it makes it easy to trust Him to bring everything out all right.

We can fancy what a weary journey it seemed to the maiden, leaving behind her all she loved and going among strangers to an unknown home. How many times her heart must have failed and she have been tempted to turn back! But bravely she kept on until, toward sunset one evening, they neared the end of their journey. Looking in the distance she saw a man walking in the fields, and when the servant told her that it was his young master, she veiled her face and lighting off her camel awaited with beating heart for him to come up to them. The servant told his master all the way the Lord had led him and how He had prospered his way. When the young man saw Rebekah's face he loved her, and taking her into the tent which had been his mother's she became his wife and comforted and cheered him.

THOUGHTS FOR THE QUIET HOUR.

FEBRUARY, 1919.

Saturday, 1st. [*Paul and Barnabas*] *declared all things that God had done with them. Acts xv. 4.*

Service and power are measured by God's working through men, not by man's working for God.—*Selected.*

Sunday, 2nd. *Rest in the* LORD, *and wait patiently for him. Ps. xxxvii. 7.*

Just a little patient waiting,
Though a rising mist of tears
Oft obscures our longing vision
As flit by the fleeting years.

Just a little patient waiting,
Leaving all we may not know
In the hand of Him Who guideth,
Through the shadows here below.

Step by step the way leads onward,
One by one the moments fly;
Swiftly, though so long it seemeth,
Draweth near the by and by.

On the hilltop bright appearing
Breaks the dawn we fain would see,
Onward, for the way leads upward,
Into light for thee and me.

Just a little patient waiting,
Just a trust that knows not fear,
Just a love that, self-forgetting,
Brings thy fellow traveler cheer.

Just a faith that all earth's trials
Dim not, thickly though they come.
Just a little while, O pilgrim,
Then, the daydawn, rest and home.

—*Selected.*

Monday, 3rd. *Redeeming the time. Eph. v. 16.*

What possibilities are yours! Every new day that dawns is a fresh opportunity: it is like the marble in the quarry waiting for you to chisel out of it some beautiful thing—some lasting monument of purity and grace that shall stand for you when your earth life is ended. Remember that God gives you the marble to make of it what you will.—*Selected.*

Tuesday, 4th. *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. 1 Pet. v. 7.*

The care which God has is the care of One Who loves, and therefore takes on His own heart the troubles of His beloved one. And what does He do with our care when thus we cast it upon Him? He does not take it and put it right away, hiding it forever from our view. We wish He would do that. He does something altogether better. He takes the burden of care and puts it gently back on our shoulders, saying: "Remember it is *My* care now; it is *yours* no longer. And now I want you to carry it for Me." Then the yoke feels easy, and the burden is light.—*Robert Tuck.*

Wednesday, 5th.* *Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly. 1 Cor. ix. 25, 26.*

What did Paul run for? Salvation? Ten thousand times no; he got that at the Cross. That was settled long ago. Paul ran for a *crown*. . . . . I never touch that life of Paul, and I never hear his name mentioned, but it makes me feel ashamed of myself. If I may be allowed the expression, Satan got hold of his match when he got hold of Paul. He never got him off the right track. Paul kept his eye right on Christ, and now he wears his crown.—*D. L. Moody.*

Thursday, 6th. *Faithful in all things. 1 Tim. iii. 11.*

It may be that we cannot be great, let us be good. If we cannot shine as great lights, let us make our light shine as God has made it to shine. Let us live lives as in the presence of Christ, anxious for His approval, and glad to take the condemnation of the world, and of Christ's professed servants even, if we get the commendation of angels and of our Master. The "Well done" is to the faithful servant, the *faithful,* not the great. Let us watch. Let us watch and pray that we may be faithful.—*James Gilmour.*

Friday, 7th. *By faith* [*Israel*] *passed through the Red sea. Heb. xi. 29.*

How happy the hearts which in every situation place unbounded confidence in Jehovah's word! Such may be hedged up on every side, and encompassed like Israel at the Red Sea, with seemingly insurmountable difficulties; yet even here they will follow Israel's example; they will cry unto God and rely upon His mercy. If means can be used, they will use them; if not, they will "stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD." "Speak unto the children of Israel," said the Lord, "that they go forward." They went: a way was made in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters. Well may it be said, "By faith [Israel] passed through the Red sea."—*Andrew Fuller.*

*Mr. D. L. Moody born, 1837.

Saturday, 8th. *Pure religion and undefiled. Jas. i. 27.*

The language of true vital religion is prayer, its action faith, and its effects union and love.—*W. E. Miller.*

Sunday, 9th. *Nevertheless God . . . . comforted us by the coming of Titus. 2 Cor. vii. 6.*

God drew near to Paul in commonplace human kindnesses and in tender human comforts. He saw the Divine seal in the ordinary event of the passing day. And that is how we may find relief on many a dull and darksome field. The Lord does not come to us in spectacular visits and in sensational forms. He still approaches us in lowly guise, and while we are looking for a Monarch He appears as a Carpenter. He visits us in some little, human kindness, or some uplifting book, or in some kindly act of courtesy and grace. His evangel reaches us in the good news from anywhere. It is the coming of the Lord in the ministry of comfort. And when such is the interpretation we give to our life, the dull day becomes radiant, and the long road is glorified with the companionship of the Lord.—*J. H. Jowett.*

Monday, 10th. *Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be. Deut. xxxiii. 25.*

Each of us may be sure that if God sends us on stony paths He will provide us with strong shoes, and will not send us out on any journey for which He does not equip us well.—*Alexander Maclaren.*

Tuesday, 11th. *Dwell deep. Jer. xlix. 8.*

May you dwell deep in Christ! When you get *upon* the Rock Christ Jesus you are safe, when you get *into* the Rock you are happy. A man *on* the Rock will be subject to the wind and to the rain, to the damp of dews and to the heat of the sun; but to a man *in* the Rock it does not matter what weather it is; whether it blows or shines, he is fully sheltered. The innermost place of the sanctuary is the most Divine. Dwell deep.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

Wednesday, 12th. *I sat alone. Jer. xv. 17.*

Ah, there is the true resting place of the soul—"alone" with God! This is where

the Word ever leads when it is indeed hid in the heart, its "joy and rejoicing." Trials sweep over the soul like a flood and make the Word of God and God's presence inestimably precious. In that presence, how do all its riches come forth in view! Then we look God in the face and come forth with His impress upon us. Alone with God! Precious shelter from every stormy wave, from every sweeping torrent, from every swelling flood! Though the storm rages wildly outside, what calmness is there! Though midnight darkness spreads its curtain over us, what light is there! Dear Refuge of our weary souls! May we ever be found near to Thy sure and certain hiding place, bathing our tears in the ocean fullness of Thy sympathy and love!—*Frederick Whitfield.*

Thursday, 13th. *Blessed are the pure in heart. Matt. v. 8.*

The perfect knowledge of God is to be attained only by the perfectly consecrated life. The human soul is a mirror on which the light of God shines; and only the pure mirror reflects the perfect image. We can have real peace only when we are sure that God is directing and supporting us in all the perplexing experiences of life; and we cannot have that certainty unless our hearts are pure, for it is only the pure heart that can see God. The glorious promise of Christ is that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—*Louis Albert Banks.*

Friday, 14th. *Choose you . . . . whom ye will serve. Josh. xxiv. 15.*

The determining thing, the thing that settles whether a man shall be a John or a Judas, is the grace of God working through our choice. Satan's power always works through the human choice. The thing that settles it on our side is our will—what we *choose* to do actively, it will decide. If we be a Judas it will be through our choosing, because of Satan's power. If we grow to be a John, or still more a Jesus, in character, it will be through our *choosing,* and *back of that the marvelous grace of God.*—*S. D. Gordon.*

Saturday, 15th. *Thou shalt do that which is right. Deut. vi. 18.*

To do right is the only real obligation that faces us.—*Selected.*

Sunday, 16th. *Take heed now; for the* LORD *hath chosen thee to build: . . . . be strong, and do it. 1 Chron. xxviii. 10.*

There is not a day, and hardly an hour in any life, where there are not many opportunities of casting down or building-up, of thwarting the first tender purpose of the soul towards a better life or helping it into more vigorous growth. But the policy of a Godlike life needs strength. "The LORD hath chosen thee to build," but thou must be strong to do it. Strong, because so many are engaged in doing the very opposite, because the impulses of our better life are apt to fluctuate, and because we have to do right as well as overcome and master wrong. You will need more strength than you can muster, but plenty awaits you in the Lord Jesus. Claim it from Him day by day. Ask Him to be stronger in you than he that is in the world. Cast your weakness down at His feet, and ask Him to make it perfect in His strength. Delay no longer; but from this moment resolve that in every conversation in which you join, in every article you write, in every speech you deliver, in the whole trend and outgoing of your life, you will endeavor to plant and not to uproot, to build and not to pull down, to help and not to hinder, whatever is good and right, however mixed with imperfection and mistake.—*F. B. Meyer.*

Monday, 17th. *Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water . . . . he shall in no wise lose his reward. Matt. x. 42.*

Life affords but few opportunities of doing great services for others; but there is scarcely an hour of the day that does not afford us an opportunity of performing some little, it may be unnoticed, kindness.—*Bowes.*

Tuesday, 18th. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another*

shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. John xxi. 18, 19.

If I may paraphrase these words, I would make them read like this: "Peter, heretofore you have mapped out your own course, you have gone your own way. You did that a while ago when you led the disciples off fishing. You did not ask Me about it. You did not wait. But, Peter, there is a time coming since all this has been put right, when Another shall direct thee." May it be true of us that we will come with uplifted hands also, and let Him lead us to the glory of His Name! —*Len G. Broughton.*

Wednesday, 19th. *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John xiii. 34, 35.*

That love of Christ to us, received into our hearts, and there producing an everlasting love to Him, will make us, in the measure in which we live in it and let it rule us, love everything and everybody that He loves. That love of Jesus Christ, stealing into our hearts and there sweetening the ever springing "issues of life," will make them flow out in glad obedience to any commandment of His.

A great monastic teacher wrote a book about "The Imitation of Christ." "Imitation" is a great word, transformation is a greater. We all receiving, on the mirror of our loving hearts, the love of Jesus Christ, "are changed into the same likeness." Thus, then, the love, which is our pattern, is also our motive and our power for obedience, and the more we bring ourselves under its influences, the more we shall love all beloved by, and lovers of, Jesus.—*Selected.*

Thursday, 20th. *I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. Acts xxvi. 19.*

In these few words is contained the whole secret of Paul's mighty success and eternal renown. There came to him from heaven a vision of what Jesus would have him do and without hesitation he obeyed that vision. He did what the great Captain of his salvation ordered. The heavenly vision comes to us all at some time in life. It comes in many ways, sometimes in ways that seem miraculous, sometimes in very ordinary, prosaic ways. But it comes. If we obey, glory is ours—not glory, perhaps, in the sight of men, but real glory, eternal glory. If we do not obey, there is a tragedy.—*R. A. Torrey.*

Friday, 21st. *Behold, I have refined thee; . . . . I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. Isa. xlviii. 10.*

The Divine call to service may be clarion, but the call to suffering comes in tender and compassionate tones, and often brings to the stricken heart the sweetest whispers of the Father's love; but we must listen if we would understand. We must not entrench ourselves in sorrow, so as to leave no open door for Him to enter with His healing and comforting balm. This "furnace of affliction" is a suffering which means *blessed fellowship with Christ.* If we will open our eyes, we shall see, walking in the midst of *our* furnace, One like unto the Son of man; and it will be a memory of joy ever after, that our loving Saviour was by our side, Himself a Partaker of our grief.—*Selected.*

Saturday, 22nd. *Conscience . . . . bearing witness. Rom. ii. 15.*

If conscience smite thee once, it is admonition; if twice, it is condemnation.—*Selected.*

Sunday, 23rd. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts. Eph. iii. 17.*

The Master came into my heart as Self
went out at the door.
"O enter, dear heavenly Guest," I cried,
"and leave me nevermore."
The place was dusty and foul and dank, but
sunshine entered in,
As His presence cleansed and sweetened,
and banished the smirch of sin.

And so, all day, it is Christ within—I am
no more mine own;
My heart is a grave no longer, since He
rolled away the stone;
He speaks through my lips, and they utter
what He would have me say:
He uses my hands for His service sweet in
His own blessed way.

My feet He sends on His errands, and they never weary grow,
Because of His strong upholding—the dear Christ Who loves me so;
The fretting troubles of every day that used to vex and sting
Have vanished like troubling nightdreams in the presence of the King.

The homely work of the household, the endless tasks of the day,
Are lightened and glory-illumined because He leads the way;
The food I place on the table is a sacrament Divine
Because He hath touched and blessed it through these poor, weak hands of mine.

And so it is Christ forever, the Christ forever and aye,
His life overflowing within me, whether I live or die;
His for the daily service wherever He sendeth me,
And His for the joy eternal and the final victory.

—*Selected.*

Monday, 24th. *Arise therefore, and be doing, and the* LORD *be with thee. 1 Chron. xxii. 16.*

If we go as far as we can in the way of our duty, God will direct and enable us to do that which of ourselves we cannot do. —*Matthew Henry.*

Tuesday, 25th. *Even Christ pleased not himself. Rom. xv. 3.*

Christ is the circumference of the Christian's liberties.—*Selected.*

Wednesday, 26th. *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Heb. xii. 11.*

Prayer does not directly take away a trial or its pain, but it preserves the strength of the whole spiritual fiber, so that the trial does not pass into temptation to sin. A sorrow comes upon you. Omit prayer and you fall out of God's testing into the devil's temptation; you get angry, hard of heart, reckless. But meet the trial with prayer, cast your care on God, and the paralyzing, embittering effects of pain and sorrow pass away, a stream of sanctifying and softening thought pours into the soul, and that which might have brought your fall but works in you "the peaceable fruit of righteousness." You pass from bitterness into endurance, from endurance into battle, and from battle to victory, till at last the trial dignifies and blesses your life.—*Stopford A. Brooke.*

Thursday, 27th. *But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. Job xxiii. 10.*

The hand that beckons us to glory waves out of impenetrable clouds. We walk in a way which we know not. We lay wise plans, and they miscarry. We commit gross blunders, and they are overruled for good. We run toward the light, and find it darkness. We sink shivering into the darkness, and find it light. We run towards the doors to which worldly ambition has called us, and only a solid granite wall is across our path. We move against that wall at the call of duty and it opens to let us through. What shall befall us, we cannot know. What is expedient, we cannot tell. Only this we know, that God would shape us to Himself, whether by the discipline of joy or sorrow. To make us perfect as He is perfect, this is the choice of our Heavenly Father, this is the end of all His revelations. Everything not helpful to this He hides away out of our sight.—*Roswell D. Hitchcock.*

Friday, 28th. *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Jas. iv. 8.*

"He will draw nigh to you." He Himself, although He may use various channels and instruments—it may be affliction or prosperity; it may be through the voice of nature or of providence; it may be through the word or example of a Christian—yet it is God Himself. But, of all instruments and channels, the written word is of the utmost importance; it stands supreme. It is through Scripture, eminently, that God draws nigh to the soul. But let us never mistake the reading of the Scripture for that real drawing nigh of the living God, toward which it is the great help, and of which it is the great witness. Scripture is not the *substitute* for God's drawing nigh to us, it is only the *channel;* the written word of the *past* must become the living word of the *present.*—*Adolph Saphir.*

DEVOTIONAL STUDIES IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS.

Rev. F. B. Meyer, B. A., D. D.

JETHRO'S COUNSEL.

(February 9, Ex. xviii. 12-26.)

Feb. 3. Ex. xviii. 1-11.
Feb. 4. Ex. xviii. 12-27.
Feb. 5. Num. xi. 10-17.
Feb. 6. Luke x. 1-11.
Feb. 7. Acts vi. 1-8.
Feb. 8. 1 Cor. xii. 1-11.
Feb. 9. 1 Cor. iii. 4-15.

There is a noteworthy parallel between this chapter and Acts vi. The Hebrew nation, emerging from centuries of slavery, took a serious step forward to completer self-government. So after Pentecost the immense increase of converts forced a similar extension of the democratization of the early Church.

Whether Jethro was father-in-law or brother-in-law to Moses is not clear. The Hebrew word may mean either relationship. He had sheltered Zipporah and her sons while Moses was carrying through the Exodus, and had just crossed the desert to bring them to the illustrious leader. The meeting was thoroughly Oriental. On his approach Moses went out to meet him, touched the ground with his forehead, kissed his relative's hand, then rose and kissed him on both cheeks. Each asked the other of his welfare with the minuteness and prolixity still characteristic of the sons of the desert, with whom time is less precious than with us.

Jethro seems to have acted as a priest in the sacrifice that followed. Like Melchizedek he was priest of the most High God. (See also Ex. iii. 1.) The fact of Moses and Aaron and the elders participating in the sacred feast which followed shows that they recognized orders of religious life and priesthood outside the limits of their own race. (See Mal. i. 11.) On the day following he witnessed a remarkable spectacle. From morning to evening Moses sat in the midst of a vast throng, slowly ploughing his way through an immense accumulation of cases which were submitted to his adjudication. It was a stupendous task to be the sole administrator of justice to the whole nation of more than two millions of people. The difficulty lay not only in their numbers but in their litigiousness. They had just emerged from generations of slavery, with all its debasing and demoralizing effects. As yet there was no Decalogue or code of rules. The first experiences of freedom are always the door to license, as the French Revolution proved. Also the recent defeat of Amalek may have left in their possession an immense amount of costly property, as in Judges viii. 25, etc. Disputes as to the proper allotment of these may have greatly added to that day's business. In any case, at the end of the day, Moses was absolutely worn out, and probably scores of people, with unadjudicated suits, went away discontented. There was ample justification for Jethro's comment: "Thou wilt .... wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee:" who then proceeds to advise a division of labor, founded on the system which is still in vogue among the Arabs. A gradation of courts was suggested, and only the most difficult causes were finally brought before Moses himself.

THE ADVANTAGES WERE OBVIOUS. (1) Moses was henceforth able to concentrate himself on the higher branches of his high calling. He was for the people *God-ward* and had time to bring the difficult cases before the Divine tribunal. Also, turning to the people, he taught them statutes and laws, and showed them the way in which they should walk and the work they should do. (2) In addition, a body of men was created, who possessed talents which had been absolutely overshadowed by the abounding activity of the great leader. In every community there is untold wealth of latent talent. "Unto every one . . . . is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." None is absolutely destitute of one talent at least, intrusted by the King. Moses chose "able men out of all Israel." They might have developed into critics and schemers, but from the moment they were intrusted with responsibility, they became staunch and useful allies.

(3) The congregation also profited greatly by the swiftness with which disputes and quarrels were dealt with. Nothing is more hurtful to a community than to leave the sore open. "Agree," said the Lord, "with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him."

The Quality of These Men Was Carefully Defined (ver. 21). They must be *men of ability.* Probably we should have credited them with admirable judgment, sanctified common sense, shrewdness to understand a case, to reconcile if reconciliation were possible, or to decide in a manner that would commend itself to the community. In the East there is no trial by jury; and therefore the need of highly developed judicial sense is the more necessary. They must be *men of piety.* "Such as fear God." He who fears God will regard man; the unjust judge did neither. When the eye is single, the whole body becomes filled with light. "My judgment," said our Lord, "is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." The Apostles asked for seven men, "full of the Spirit and of wisdom." They must be *men of truth.* Our Lord, speaking before Pilate, said that He came to bear witness to the truth, and that all who were of the truth would hear His voice. Some natures are like crystal, polished mirrors that reflect the full-orbed glory of truth. The least subterfuge or insincerity leaves an immediate mist or stain on their soul. They must also be *men of incorruptible honor.* The Eastern judge is notoriously open to bribery. In the days of Samuel, "his sons . . . . turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." When Sir Walter Raleigh, involved in a network of malice, was unjustly condemned to die, his mind turned from the earthly court, in which he had suffered vile insult and cruel wrong, to the Heavenly Tribunal, and from the intimidated judge and counsel, to Christ Whom he addressed as "the taintless Pleader, unblotted Lawyer, and true Proceeder." These are admirable characteristics. We need men and women of this type and order. Let us who profess to be clothed in the righteousness of Christ see to it that our "righteousness . . . . exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees," and that we be just, as well as devout. "Wherefore, brethren . . . ." (Phil. iv. 8).

The Application of This Lesson to the Christian Church. There, too, should be a careful economy of force. It is a mistake for any one person, be he minister or layman, to monopolize many offices. Mr. Moody used to say: It is better to set a hundred men to work, than to do the work of a hundred men. You do a real service to Christ, and also to His Church, when you evoke the latent faculty of some humble member, who has hitherto been too nervous and retiring to engage in any practical ministry. It is no kindness to others, and certainly it is no service to God, to do more than your share in the sacred duties of Church life. For the hand to do the work of the foot as well as that of a hand, for the eye to combine its own faculty with that of the ear, is to introduce anarchy and confusion.

In every Church we must have our warriors to encounter Amalek; our workers, whose deft fingers build our tabernacle; our financiers; our singers; the night watch of intercessors, who give God no rest. Some must open the doors, some light the lamps, some teach, some preach the Gospel. Some day we shall stand before our Lord. He has His own judgment seat, where He deals with His saints according as they have employed their talents. This is to be distinguished emphatically from the great white throne. Paul expressly describes it as "the judgment seat of Christ." There our rewards will be allotted. He will reward us righteously. The reward will be apportioned, not according to the apparent results, but to the faithfulness with which each fulfilled his humble task. The smallest wheel in a big machine is able by its precision to promote, or by its inexactitude to impair, the entire movement; so the most insignificant workers of the Church are needed for the well-being and successful operation of the whole. But let it be remembered that the eyes of the servant must ever be fixed on the least movement of the Master's hand, for love's sake, and not for reward. Remember also that "the branch cannot bear fruit, ... except it abide in the vine."

Golden Text: *Gal. vi. 2.*

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

(February 16, Ex. xx. 1-17.)

Feb. 10. Ex. xx. 1-11.
Feb. 11. Ex. xx. 12-21.
Feb. 12. Ex. xxxiv. 1-8.
Feb. 13. Ps. cxix. 33-40.
Feb. 14. Ps. cxix. 97-104.
Feb. 15. Rom. xiii. 8-14.
Feb. 16. Mark xii. 28-34.

The scene of the giving of the Law is unparalleled in history. Search the annals of any nation under heaven, and there is nothing to compare with this august event. The phrase, "Ten Commandments," was suggested by our Lord's words to the young ruler in Matt. xix. 17. The Hebrew phrase is "The Ten Words." They are also described as The Law, The Covenant, and The Tables of Testimony. Three remarkable characteristics emphasize their importance. (1) They were spoken by God Himself; (2) they were written by the finger of God on the tables of stone; and (3) they set forth His will for the government and righteous judgment of man. The ultimate source of Right and Wrong is founded on the nature of things. It is wrong to murder, because if we murder we sin against love, which is fundamental to the throne and nature of God. To put it in a nutshell,—Murder is wrong, not simply because God says so, but God says so that we may know clearly from His own lips that the murderer is setting himself against the fundamentals of the universe. The clock does not make time. Time existed ages before it was measured by clocks: but a clock is indispensable because it indicates the exact point of time which is passing over us.

THE INTRODUCTORY SENTENCE (ver. 1, 2). First God saves and then delivers His law. Because He had brought His people "out of darkness into his marvellous light," He pleads with them to keep His law that it may be well with them. (See Deut. vi. 24.) Had these commandments been given in Egypt, Israel would have turned from them in despair. They would not have hearkened for bitterness of spirit. Therefore, while they were suffering beneath Pharaoh's iron bondage, God "made bare his holy arm" on their behalf, and brought them as on eagles' wings to Himself. His manna awaited them each morning; His water followed them flowing from flinty rocks; His guiding pillar shone before their eyes. Then it was that His voice broke on them almost in the words afterwards used by our Lord, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Thus He deals still. He "hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son," made us His heirs, and now He entreats us to walk in His ways and do His will.

THE CONTENTS OF THE DECALOGUE. *Note the divisions.* That there were ten is proved by Deut. x. 4, but opinions have differed as to the division of the material under these ten divisions. The Greek Church and the Reformed Churches, with the exception of the Lutherans, divide as in the American and Revised Versions; but the Roman Church combines our first and second into one and breaks our tenth into two. But the latter division fails to emphasize the clear difference between having another God than Jehovah, which is one form of sin, and making an image for worship, which is another. It is thought that there were two stone tables, and that the Ten Commandments were divided equally. If so, the honor of the parent is on the same level as the four that refer to God. But perhaps the old division is better, into four and six, the first regarding our duty to God, and the second that to man.

Note the position of these two divisions. Our duty to God lays the needful foundations for the right discharge of our duties to man. The love of God is fundamental. Neglect your piety, and you will fail in your ethics. Honor God in His Being, Worship, Name, and Day, and you will refrain from injuring your neighbor in deed, word, or thought. The whole of the Ten Commandments is gathered up in the one word *Love.* (See Rom. xiii. 8-10.) Thus their heart is contained in ver. 6: "shewing mercy unto thousands . . . . that *love* me." It is impossible to keep free from malice, hatred, covetousness, and passion except we are possessed with love; and we cannot love man perfectly unless "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit." (See Mark xii. 29-34.)

The Decalogue is therefore a unity. The Apostle James, who was an austere son of the law, insists that "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one

point, he is become guilty of all" (Jas. ii. 10, R. V.). It seems a severe statement. We are apt to think that if we obey nine out of the ten, we have done fairly well, and may be excused the other. But we forget that these ten words deal with so many aspects of the love of God, as it looks out on the different phases of human life. They are ten facets on one diamond, or ten panes of glass in the same lighthouse tower. In ordinary life a man may be a perfectly good citizen in every point except one. For instance, he may get intoxicated, and one gross instance of inebriety or impurity will wreck his whole career. You may never come within measurable distance of murder or theft, yet if you covet, then, like the Apostle in Rom. vii. 7, 8, you come under the condemnation and lash of the law, which requires perfect obedience of all who offer themselves to be judged at its bar.

These ten words imply that sin is in the world. Looked at from this standpoint, what a revelation is afforded of the evil of the heart of man! You can judge of the moral condition of a nation by studying its statute book. And when we add to the Decalogue, as stated in this chapter, that further intensive meaning supplied in Matt. v. by our Lord, we may shrink back from the mirror held up to ourselves. We know that we are capable of all these things. We realize that the sin of the heart is a bitter root, which may bear in our case, as in the thousands of cases, the apples of Sodom. In other words, there is not one of these commandments that does not find its correlative in our souls. We can never read of a case in the criminal court without the sad reflection, "I might be standing where that man stands, if it were not for the grace of God." (See Mark vii. 21, 22.)

This is what the Apostle meant when he said that the holy, just, and good law of God slew him (Rom. vii. 11). What was good in itself became death to him, because it searched the depths of his nature, and made him hopeless of meeting its just and inexorable demands. Even if we are outwardly better than our fellows, we may be so proud of it, that, like the Pharisee in the parable, we go down to our home *un*justified. If the drill sergeant requires recruits to reach a certain measurement—let us say six feet—it will not help a man to be two inches taller than any of his companions, if he is an inch shorter than the standard. John Bunyan tells us that before he yielded himself to be saved by the grace and merit of Christ, his heart resembled an unswept room, in which the dust of months, unswept by the broom, lay in thick layers. To a superficial gaze, if viewed in the twilight, it might appear swept, cleansed, and garnished. But when the full light of the Divine demands fell on him and searched him, he realized the truth about himself, and was startled to find that the law itself stirred up a resistance, as the broom dust. Tell a man or child not to do a thing, and immediately you excite a determination to do it.

What hope is there? We shall never pass muster if we elect to be tried at the bar of God's immaculate and inexorable law. As the Apostle puts it: "We are shut up to Christ." (See Rom. viii. 3.) First: our Lord fulfilled for us the obligations of the law to the last detail. He magnified and honored it. He not only abstained from its prohibitions, but met its requirements. When He died on the Cross, He was made a curse for us. He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree," paid our debt, bore our stripes, exhausted our deserved penalty, and redeemed us from its curse. (See Gal. iii. 13.) If we are united with Him, we have in Him met all the demands of a broken law. He has met them for us. We are therefore "justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 38, 39). Then by His indwelling Spirit, He creates in us an inner obedience such as no external law could obtain. (See Rom. iii. 31.)

GOLDEN TEXT: *Luke x. 27.*

MOSES PRAYING FOR ISRAEL.

(February 23, Ex. xxxii. 7-14.)

Feb. 17. Ex. xxxii. 7-14.
Feb. 18. Ex. xxxii. 30-35.
Feb. 19. Deut. ix. 11-19.
Feb. 20. 1 Sam. xii. 19-25.
Feb. 21. 1 Kings xviii. 36-46.
Feb. 22. Eph. iii. 14-21.
Feb. 23. Jas. v. 13-20.

Barely three months had passed since Israel had passed through the Red Sea, and every hour had been marked by evidences of the Divine care. But notwithstanding all, and their repeated protesta-

tions that they would serve God only, they insisted on worshiping the Almighty under the form of a calf, after the bull Mnevis, with which Egypt had made them familiar. Moses felt keenly the sin and shame of their action, of which he heard first from the lips of the Almighty, and he feared that an inevitable penalty must befall. On the one hand, if Eternal Justice did not punish this sin, the giving of the law would not be binding. On the other hand, if the heavy stroke of judgment fell, and the dust of the people mingled with the sands of the desert, the Egyptians would laugh derisively, and declare that Jehovah had at last discovered that the people were worthless.

As we read this wonderful story, it would almost appear as though Moses were pressing God to retreat step by step, and made Him yield before his importunity, whereas, in point of fact, God was only drawing him on to learn the love and grace of His own Divine character. It was with him as with Abraham when he pleaded for Sodom, and with the Syrophenician woman, pleading for her child. True prayer is an amazing education.

1. *Moses' first object was to secure that Israel should not be blotted out by an act of strong punitive destruction (ver. 7-14).* The thought seems to have flashed across his mind, whether it might not, after all, be better for this people, who were so rebellious and stiff-necked, to be destroyed, and that from his own family and beneath his own tutelage, a new, young, God-fearing nation might originate. A similar test was applied to Abraham (Gen. xxii. 1, 2 R. V.). But the thought was instantly dismissed. Moses wanted no glory for himself. He loved the people too well for that. Their lot and his, their destiny and his, should be identical. When he had, therefore, put away all thought of his own ambition, he was able to look God in the face and say: "Father, there are three reasons why they must not be destroyed: *First,* Thou canst not go back on Thy past kindness, without stultifying all that has taken place. *Second,* if Thou shouldst destroy them, the Egyptians would deride Thee and Thy pledged word. *Third,* the Covenant made with their fathers must be maintained, and its provisions and promises fulfilled." Thus do great souls plead with God. When they speak thus, there is no denying them. To take God at His own word, and to remind Him that He had bound Himself inextricably by His own engagements, is to hold Him to the Covenant. This is magnificent faith. God seemed to have altered His purpose; but, in fact, Moses had obtained a new and deeper vision of His nature.

2. *Moses' second effort was to secure that their sin should be forgiven (ver. 30-35).* Moses was deeply moved. The broken tables of the law, the dust of the idol mingled with the brook, the corpses strewing the camp—all indicated the intensity of his emotion. But if *he* felt thus, how might not *God* be feeling in the Unseen? Had they not committed the unpardonable sin? Would the blood of bulls and goats suffice to take away their sin? The next morning it seemed as though a new thought had come to him. During the preceding forty days and nights he had been hearing and learning from God much about Atonement, and during the sleepless watches of the night, the idea seems to have occurred to him that God might accept him as a sacrifice on behalf of the guilty nation. It was a noble resolve. It matches Rom. ix. 1-3. Yes, and a Greater said: "This is my blood, ... shed for many for the remission of sins."

So he climbed the well-known mountain path, and stood again before the Lord, and said: "If thou wilt forgive their sin—;" and then came a pause. It was an unfinished sentence, broken by his emotion. Can we finish it? *"Then,* Thou wilt reveal Thy noblest attributes. *Then,* Thou wilt bind them to Thee forever. *Then,* my tongue shall extol Thy praise. But if Thou canst not forgive without blood, and if the blood of beasts will not avail, take my life, blot me out of the Book of Life. Take *me,* if only Thou wilt spare them." God did not need to accept that offer, because, across the plains of time, He saw the upreared Cross, where in the Person of our Lord He would make Atonement more precious and satisfactory than any which Moses could have yielded. Moses was unable to make Atonement, because he was himself a sinner; but Rom. iii. 21-31 tells the whole story. In virtue of that

Supreme Sacrifice, forgiveness was granted, and Moses was bidden to lead his people to the land of promise, with the assurance that the Angel of God's Presence would accompany them. He had thought God must have sacrifice as a condition of pardon; he learned that God could forgive apart from animal or human sacrifice, because He made the Atonement by the gift of His Son.

3. *Moses' third effort was to secure that not God's Angel, but God Himself, should continue to go with them* (xxxiii. 1-17). Moses knew that his people were forgiven, but it hurt him to hear that an angel was to be deputed to accompany them. The burden of two and a half millions of people was too heavy for him to bear, even with angel help. Even though an angel escort accompanied the march, he felt that it could not compensate for the Divine Absence. He could never rest until he had obtained the assurance of the Divine Presence. He spoke of his anxiety to his people, who awoke to realize what they were forfeiting, and to show their grief divested themselves of their jewels. But their great leader felt that only prayer could secure the reversal of God's sentence. He could not always be ascending Sinai. The camp needed his superintendence, and as there was as yet no dedicated shrine, he probably took his own tent and erected it outside the camp, as the temporary meeting-place between God and all faithful souls.

As Moses entered and the curtain fell behind him, every man from his tent door watched his movements, and said, "He is going in yonder to pray for us." When he was alone with God he seemed to say: "If Thou dost not go with me, I cannot go. Angels may be fair, and sweet, and strong, but I must have Thee. Thou canst not leave me, a lonely man, to cross the wilderness without Thy Presence." And his request was granted. (See xxxiii. 17.)

4. *Moses' fourth effort was that God would restore the covenant that the people had broken* (xxxiv. 1, etc.). Those broken pieces of the tables of stone were emblems of the broken covenant; could it be rebuilt? And he was told to hew from the rock new tables. Bearing them carefully in his hands, he ascended once again the mountain, "and the LORD descended, ... and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD." "Abide here in this place." Then the shadow of God's hand fell upon him. He saw nothing, but he heard the measured tread of the heavenly hosts, as they passed down the mountain valley beneath. He heard the harpers harping with their harps. He heard also the voice of the Eternal proclaiming the attributes of His character. Then as the procession passed away, he made haste, bowed his head, and gave himself to intercession. (See ver. 8, 9.) For the reply see ver. 10, etc. To this was added the return to his keeping of the tables of stone, not now blank, but covered as the others had been, with the Divine handwriting. Then Moses knew that the sin of his people was put away forever, and that they occupied their olden place in God's loving regard. Are we also not taught that in the New Covenant God writes not on tables of stone, but on the tablets of the heart, His new best Name of Love? (Heb. viii. 9-13).

GOLDEN TEXT: *Jas. v. 16.*

THE REPORT OF THE SPIES.

(March 2, Numbers xiv. 1-10.)

Feb. 24. Num. xiii. 17-25.
Feb. 25. Num. xiii. 26-33.
Feb. 26. Num. xiv. 1-10.
Feb. 27. Heb. iv. 1-7.
Feb. 28. Ps. xlvi.
Mar. 1. 1 John v. 1-12.
Mar. 2. Rom. viii. 31-39.

The march from Kibroth to Kadesh is described in Deut. i. 19 as "that great and terrible wilderness." But it must have been very refreshing for the Hebrew people to contrast the verdant prospect with the limestone plain of the desert, over which they had been traveling for the past fifteen months. Moses had no idea that forty years of similar wanderings were before them. It never occurred to him that another than himself would finally settle the people in the land of promise. He probably thought that his life work was practically done. As the people encamped in sight of the rolling prairies of Canaan he said, "Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the LORD our God doth give unto us" (Deut. i. 20, 21). As he spoke thus, there was a sigh of relief deep down in his heart. Surely he might lay down

his task. God's glory was secured. The Egyptians and all the neighboring nations must hear and be convinced.

Is it not thus that we all picture to ourselves some blessed landscape lying warm and sunny under the smile of Heaven? We comfort ourselves with the thought that at last the long lane will have a turning, and the wilderness march will end in Canaan. We are amazed and disappointed when we are bidden to turn back. After all it may be our lot to die alone on some Pisgah height away from the warm tendance of loving hands and loyal hearts.

The Origin of His Disappointment. It was a great mistake to wish to spy out the land. Surely it should have been enough that GOD Himself had chosen it. Again and again the people had been assured that the land "floweth with milk and honey"; the milk indicated rich pasture, the honey abundance of flowers. What God had promised to Abraham and his seed must have been worthy of the Giver. But the people insisted that men should be sent to "search . . . . out the land, and bring . . . . word again" (Deut. i. 22). As afterwards when Israel insisted on having Saul as king they were allowed to have what they chose, so it was in this case, God gave them their hearts' desire but leanness crept into their souls.

It was more than a mistake when Israel allowed the discouraging report of the majority of the spies to weaken their faith. On their return the spies were unanimous as to the beauty and plenty of the country; but only two of them, Caleb and Joshua, dared to believe that the Lord was greater than the giants. The report of the majority carried the congregation, they put the giants between themselves and God, instead of God between themselves and the giants. Note, that they lost Canaan, not because of the graves of lust, but because of their unbelief. Let us remember that the one thing which can exclude us from our inheritance in Christ is not sin, but our inability to believe that the grace of God will abound over the very tops of the mountains of our guilt. (See Rom. v. 21.)

The crowning mistake and sin was the proposal to substitute a captain for their God-given leader. In doing this, they came near to breaking his heart. With unutterable agony, he fell on his face before the people, sorrowing most of all at the shameful return made to God, Who through such mighty miracles had testified His mighty power to save to the uttermost. Moses' behavior in this awful hour was simply magnificent, his prayer on the behalf of the people given in ver. 11-19 is one of the noblest outpourings of the human soul of which we have any record. There are few grander passages in the whole Bible than this. Quoting the words which God had spoken into his heart at Sinai, he pleaded for the Divine pardon on the behalf of his people, according to the plenteousness of His mercy.

The Penalty Which Unbelief Involved. God answered Moses' intercession by the promise that the people should be pardoned (Num. xiv. 20). But because they who had seen His glory and the signs which were wrought in Egypt and the wilderness had refused to believe and obey, it was ordained that they should not enter the land, on the border of which they stood, but must turn back to wander through the wilderness till the whole generation had passed away. (See ver. 29-33.) It was a terrible disappointment, but it is easy to understand its reasonableness. The land was filled with nations that had attained a considerable amount of civilization. It was inhabited by tribes of the great Hittite race, who have left traces of literature, art, and organization which give evidence of unusual advance in the arts of life. The cities were strongly walled, the warriors well equipped, there were leagues of confederacy between which the strongest nations of the age might quail, and nothing would be spared to resist any attempt on the part of Israel to wrench territory from their grasp. Under these circumstances only spiritual help could avail, God must give them the land, or they would never obtain it. If their hearts failed them at the evil report of their spies, how certainly they would fail when compelled to stand face to face with those iron battalions!

The lesson is obvious. There is a great inheritance of joy and peace awaiting us in Christ, but the clue to its enjoyment is a simple faith in Him. If we stand gazing on the walled cities, and measuring

the height of the giants, we shall be paralyzed with fear. Only as we look above these into God's blue Heaven, and behold Him riding to our help shall we possess and enjoy "the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." This is the supreme lesson of Heb. iii., iv.

THE PROTEST OF JOSHUA AND CALEB. They stood alone against the whole congregation with undaunted faith. They insisted that God was well able to give the land to His people. They urged that it would be as easy to overcome the Canaanites as to eat bread. They declared that proud as their bearing might be, their strength had already departed from them. It seemed as though the veil had been rent asunder, as the two friends stood in the "sacred place of the most High." (See Isaiah li. 12, 13.)

God vindicated His faithful servants, as He always will those who dare to stand alone in loyalty and faith. "The glory of the LORD appeared in the tent"—a silent and radiant testimony to His presence. All the children of Israel saw it, and were abashed. This was the witness of vindication, the sign of the Divine ratification of the noble testimony of these true men. And in the after years they two of all the people entered the land through which they had passed, and possessed it. Each of them settled on a plot which had commended itself to his eyes in their transient visit. In this also we have the profound lesson, that God "will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them." God's vindication of those who trust in Him, before the souls of men, may tarry, but it is sure. (See Rev. vi. 11.)

GOLDEN TEXT: *1 John v. 4.*

ILLUSTRATIVE HINTS AND HELPS.

Ida Q. Moulton.

Hebrews x. 5-9, 19-25.

A swimmer sporting in the waters of Rockaway Beach saw an object out at sea that looked like a man on horseback. Swimming out he saw on a log a man not able to swim, who had been bathing in shallow water and had mounted a log to lazily float about, and before he was aware of it had been carried out beyond his depth. So many people who do not want to take the trouble to "make up their own mind," mount the minds of others, listlessly and lazily float about, and before they realize it are all at sea, which is just what Satan aimed at when he prevented or perverted them from having a mind of their own.

* * * * *

A worker in New York on one of her visits to the Eliada Orphanage told the children how in the great city they had put up everywhere they could, the sign "Safety First." One little fellow in the audience jumped up and said, "Down here we have put God first." Whoever puts God first in his life has solved all his problems and difficulties.

"Blest is the man of high ideals,
Who falls to-day, to-morrow, and for days to come,
But never lowers his standards, nor surrenders to defeat,
Till hand and foot, till eye and ear,
Till vocal cord and tongue,
Till mind and heart are disciplined,
And all abilities of body and of soul
Are marshalled by the will
And move onward to the drumbeat of perfection."

* * * * *

There has been invented an electrical contrivance called the frost bell, which is of great value to greenhouses, and which has saved many crops of fruit and flowers in the past year. This bell is connected with a thermometer and when the mercury falls to a certain point, set by a person, the bell rings a warning in that house or office.

At the dawn of every day the bells of life peal forth the refrain, "Choose, choose, choose." They warn and they allure, they

remonstrate and they bribe, they decoy and they repel. Their tones linger over the way of blight and frost, and the way of flowers and fruit. Which way will I follow? With the Bible as our thermometer there can be no doubt as to the tones we *should* follow. Will we follow them?

Psalm xci. 1-16.

In some sections in the West, they have the following plan of watering cattle: The cattle have to mount a platform to reach the troughs. As they step on the platform their weight presses a lever, and this throws the water into the troughs. In a similar way must we dumbly step upon the promises of God. We cannot understand life's lever pressures. It is folly to say we believe His promises, then distrust His knowledge and ability to press the lever at the right time and place.

* * * * *

The following incident, in rhyme, tells how a woman, who had long tried to become a Christian, accepted Christ on a bridge at the Falls of Niagara.

"The torrent was strong and fierce,
The bridge where I stood seem'd weak,
Bewilder'd I clung to its sheltering rail
In a dread which I could not speak.

"Then calm o'er the thundering roar
I heard a voice at my side—
A voice with a note of strong command,
'Your hand in the hand of the Guide.'

"Though fearful and trembling still,
I unloosed *one* anxious grasp,
Not venturing more, though I felt the gain
Of that strong, sustaining clasp.

"And as there I wondering stood,
Again o'er the deafening tide
That voice rang forth, more insistent now—
'Both hands in the hands of the Guide.'

"I ventured to trust Him then;
In a moment all was peace,
And I onward moved in assurance calm,
And the joy of a great release."

* * * * *

A Christian woman who wanted to secure a schoolhouse for a Sunday school repeatedly applied to the trustee, an infidel, who always refused. Finally she said to him one day, "I believe that I am going to get it." He replied, "I should like to know how; I won't give you the key." "The Lord will unlock it. I have found that if I keep on trying, praying and *trusting,* something always gives way." The trustee handed over the key.

We must not forget that the keys of effort and prayer are on the same ring as the key of trust.

* * * * *

History relates, that at the Battle of Crécy, where Edward the Black Prince then but a youth of eighteen led the van, the king, his father, drew up a strong party on a rising ground, and there beheld the conflict, in readiness to send relief where it should be wanted. The young prince, being sharply charged, and in some danger, sent to his father for succor; and, as the king delayed to send it, another messenger was sent to crave immediate assistance. To him the king replied, "Go, tell my son, I am not so inexperienced a commander as not to know when succor is wanted, nor so careless a father as not to send it." In a thousand ways doth Christ give us the message the king gave his son. *Why* are we so slow and lukewarm in our trust?

Matthew xxviii. 16-20.

A faithful Bible woman was in a Japanese hospital all last summer for treatment. When she left she asked the physician for his bill, and this was his reply. "I am a Buddhist, and you are a Christian, but I see that you are working at your religion and so there's no bill." The woman went to a missionary and asked, "How can I repay him?" then suddenly exclaimed, "Oh, I can pray that he too may become a Christian and then he will be fully repaid." Her prayers were answered, and the physician, a man of great influence and high rank, accepted the way of salvation and became a great power for good in the hospital.

* * * * *

A missionary in Japan recently received the following postcard request from a young man not a Christian, living in Matsuyama.

"Imagining that it will be very good for us that we consist of the party whose are anxious to study in the Bible, I wish you that, would you not teach us the Bible and lead us to the heaven, if you please or not."

"Returning one night," says the missionary, "I found four of these young men with Bibles in their hands waiting for me. This group sprang into being in direct answer to prayer. They were true to the spirit of the writing on the card, and were easily led into the way of life."

* * * * *

The Japanese Minister of Finance, Baron Sakatani, though not a Christian himself, recently said:

"Christianity has brought a widening of our ideas, a feeling of internationalism and brotherhood. It has always been unselfish and has stood aside from personal profit.

"It has defined the social rights of our people, and greatly improved the position of women.

"Some people fear that the general introduction of Christianity into Japan would be destructive of the basis of the old Japanese patriotism. I believe that it is and will be a great benefit to patriotism."

* * * * *

The following extract from a prominent Japanese woman suggests the foundation principles for the new era of women in Japan.

"I wanted women to be good and I wanted to help them to improve their lot. I found that I could not accomplish what I desired without religion. That conclusion sent me to study religion from the woman's point of view. I found that there is no hope for women in any of the religions of the Orient. . . . . Then I began to read the Bible. I did not like some parts of it any better than I like the religions of the East. When I read the Gospels I found that Jesus made no distinction between the sexes. I liked that. We are all, women as well as men, children of God. I came to the conclusion that the only hope for the women of the Orient to attain their true position is through Christianity."

John xv. 12-17.

A teacher, explaining to her class the meaning of "ministers of his, that do his pleasure," asked, "How do angels carry out God's will?" From one and another came these answers: "They do it at once." "They do it well." "They do it with all their heart." Then there was a pause. At last a timid girl said, "They do it without asking any questions." In her answer is the highest form of obedience. As two lovers anticipate each other's will without asking questions, so we, if we love God with all our hearts, even anticipate His will, and give Him unquestioning obedience. Then

"Up and down our lives obedient
Walk, dear Christ, with footsteps radiant,
Till these garden lives shall be
Fair with duties done for thee."

* * * * *

The eminent classical scholar, George Bowen, was in his early manhood a rank unbeliever. There came into his life a terrible, revolting, bitter experience which made him feel the need of a belief in immortality. In the darkness of the night he wrote these words:

"If there is One above all others Who notices the desires of men, I wish Him to take note of the fact that if it pleases Him to make known His will concerning me it will be my highest privilege to do that will wherever it may be and whatever it may be and whatever it may involve."

God heard this cry out of the darkness. Bowen became a Christian, gave up his luxurious home and life, went to India and stayed forty years without a change, living as one of the people of the land. Persecution, epidemic, the fierce, enervating heat, could not drive him from the crowded streets of Bombay. Such obedience costs—but it is worth the price.

* * * * *

"'If God is wise and kind,' said she,
'Why did He let my roses die?'
A moment's pause, a smile, a sigh,
And then, 'I do not know, my dear,
Some questions are not answered here.'
'But is it wrong to ask?' 'Not so,
My child. That we should seek to know
Proves *right* to know, beyond a doubt;
And some day we shall find out
Why roses die.' And then I wait
Sure of my answer, soon or late;
Secure that Love doth hold for me
The key to all life's mystery;
And oh, so glad to leave it there,
Though my dead roses were so fair."

Christ has shown us that love not only means service, sacrifice, and sometimes death—but obedience even when we do not understand the reason of His commands.

BIBLE NOTES FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS.

FEBRUARY, 1919.

Saturday, 1st. Matthew xxv. 14-46.

Ver. 40. It is frequently pointed out that the sense of sin is decreasing, and for this charge there is considerable evidence. Confession to God has not the former accent of self-abasement and of personal guilt. Side by side, however, with this decay in the consciousness of personal offense against God, there is a sense of obligation towards our neighbor which is distinctly in advance of anything known to our fathers.

Are we not apt to isolate these two moral facts—the decay of the sense of sin against God, and the increase of the sense of sin against man? At least, we forget to correlate them; we assume that there is no unity in the religious life. Ought we not to believe that God is within this creation so that one cannot separate any part of it from Him in Whom every part lives and moves and has its being? Is not the hem of His garment within reach of us all? Can we injure a little child and not injure Him? Can we help a man in the straits of life and not help Him?

Ought we to hesitate which idea of God to accept as our working principle in life? Is not the distant God a mechanical conception, and an obsolete deism? Is not the indwelling God a convincing idea and the religion of Jesus? Within the sphere of Christian thought there is only one life, one love, one faith, one sin. We speak of the solidarity of man: since the Incarnation we should speak of the solidarity of man and God.

All service, as well as all injury, ends in God, and is done to God. This truth should bring liberty to two opposite people, and the first is a believer with a scrupulous conscience. There are Christians who are afraid of letting their heart go, and pouring forth their affection upon those they love, lest they should be giving to the creature what ought to be reserved for God. God is no watchful rival, demanding the lion's share of our heart. He is content if we love, for all the love we give to those whom we see we are giving to God Whom we cannot see. And every stream of love finds its way at last into the eternal ocean of His heart from which first it rose.

This truth should also be liberty to the unbeliever with an honest mind. There are many persons in the land to-day, and within the Church, who hesitate to call themselves Christians because, as they confess, they have not what they judge to be a right mind towards God. And yet this non-religious man, who has made no profession of faith, and counts himself unworthy to approach the Sacrament, may be the most loyal of husbands and the most self-sacrificing of fathers, as well as a charitable citizen and a reliable friend. But God—in this matter, if you please, a jealous and grasping Master—claims every act as done to Him. He has not known God, so my friend says, which is a serious loss of comfort. But there is something more important and decisive—God has known him, God is loving him, and in a day to come God is going to reward him.—*John Watson.*

Sunday, 2nd. Matthew xxvi. 1-13.

"Simon the leper" (ver. 6). Why this surname? Why not say "Simon," and let his identification be established by other means than by recalling the loathsomeness of the disease? Why these expansions of names, why these fringes and attachments? Why not identify men by something better than leprosy, or evil deed, or red shame of any kind?

The Lord was always talking thus to the people whom He made dear to His heart. He was saying to them every day almost, Remember thou also wast a stranger; bethink thee of the bondage days of old Egypt; recall the time when thou wouldst have been thankful for a mouthful of bread and a night's hospitable lodging; remember. There are men round thee to whom thou mayest show kindness for David's sake, for Jonathan's sake, for thy father's sake, for thy mother's sake, for auld lang syne's sake. The past will follow thee with name, and the intention of such pursuit is thy chastening, humbling; not a contemptuous humbling, but a stimulating and comforting humbling, so that thou mayest get rid of the old rags and put on the garments of duty. There must be a policy in this.

Take another instance, "Rahab the harlot." Why torment the woman by such memories? Was it not enough to call her "Rahab who received the spies"? Why is her sin to be ever blackened and deepened and thrust in her face as a present-day memory and almost a present-day fact, so hot the breath, so damning the recollection? But this is the way; there must be a purpose in it. We cannot be satisfied until

we find out the way into the heart of that purpose; always reminding a man that he was born blind, always refreshing his memory with the fact that once he had to beg his bread even "at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful"; always reminding the soul that it was just as bad once as any other soul ever could be. Why these painful, shocking, heart-cutting reminiscences and reminders? She was saved by faith, yet she was "Rahab the harlot." Again and again it is forced upon us that there must be some meaning in all this, that a certain process has not yet been completed. Regeneration has been completed, blessed be God, but resurrection has yet to begin; regeneration is completed, consummated, crowned by resurrection, the old foul body left with the worms, and the new body, that is to say, the heavenly and the spiritual, has assumed the wedding garment, made fit for the wedding feast.

If we turn over a few pages of the New Testament we shall find that God gives His people a new name. He gives some of them a name which no man can read but the bearer thereof. Sometime He will give us a name that will have no evil associations attaching to it. The name "sinner" will be forgotten, and no man will say to another in the city celestial, Is not this he that sat and begged? No; in that great home city there shall be no such reminder, "for the former things are passed away." Neither shall there be any limiting names. We take no leprous garment into heaven, our evil deeds we leave far behind us—behind the back of God.—*Joseph Parker.*

Monday, 3rd. Matthew xxvi. 14-35.

Ver. 15. Three times, in the Gospel narrative, is Judas said to have been, in some special sense, the devil's instrument. And the first occasion was a year before the actual betrayal. "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" What did it mean? Already, to the eye of Christ, there was seen the line of moral cleavage between the one and the eleven. Even in despondency, and almost despair, they are ready to fling away the cherished hope of ambition, of personal gain, and cling to Him they loved. And yet not all. One has in secret made a different choice. He is still in external union with them. But he fought for his own hand, when he joined what he thought the winning side, and he will fight for his own hand now that he foresees its failure—not openly, but secretly; in outward friendship and companionship, but with secret alienation of heart. He was among the disciples, but, though perhaps they did not know it, he is no longer one of them. So the old sin of Paradise is repeated. The act, which at heart all sin is, the self-love which separates man from God and makes him try to live and stand alone.

It almost seems as if, in our day, Christ is leading His Church through the same description of disappointment through which He led His disciples. We are told from outside that Christianity has failed. And, if we accept and apply the world's test of what failure is, we must admit that it is true. Christianity has not introduced a golden age. Have we, any of us, who are signed with the Cross, and have received the seal of the Lord, nay, who have been brought into closest union with Him in the Sacrament of His love, have we been sometimes disquieted, sometimes despondent, at the failure of Christianity? If so, what then? For it is here that we come to the dividing of the ways, the line which separates the followers of the Crucified from those who would be Christians without the Cross.

Christ has many open enemies; but it is among the baptized that the traitors are found, and the darkest treachery is that of those who have been brought very near their Lord. Therefore "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Let us therefore *fear.* The beginning of treachery is that which we know so well, and fear so little—*unreality* in religion; and the beginning of unreality is the separation of faith from life, or faith from thought. A faith which no longer shows itself in a holy life, a faith which we keep hidden away apart from all that appeals to our rational nature, is a faith to which we are already false—which, when the occasion offers, we shall be ready to betray.—*Aubrey L. Moore.*

Tuesday, 4th. Matthew xxvi. 36-75.

Ver. 39. Why did Jesus so shrink from His Cross? The answer cannot be given in a single confident word or two. Only as we realize what Christ was, and is, and shall be; only as we understand what He came to be and to do; and only as we see the part which the Cross filled in His life, and has filled in the life of the race, shall we realize the elements of bitterness in the cup from which Jesus shrank.

The first element in the cup was *His mortal pain.* Christ passed through His dying hours in complete self-control. He made His Cross a place of counsel, of blessing, and prayer. But there was a peculiar horror at the death of the Cross. It had for men of finely strung nature, and of sensitive organization, almost unbearable agony. The scourging before the crucifixion, the driving in of the nails, the uplifting of the beam, the long, slow, fiery agony of the wounds, the horror of the thirst—all of these were vividly realized by Jesus and borne in on His mind. "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the

cross," said the Apostle, recalling its mortal pain.

Another element in the cup was *the loneliness of its shame.* The very thought of the Cross brought a loneliness into Christ's spirit. He never made a movement towards it without finding Himself going forward alone. He saw that what men would desert Him for was its shame. There are three kinds of loneliness. There is the loneliness of solitude—tonic, calming, strengthening. There is the loneliness of character. A man may find himself in a community, or in a society, or even in a home, very greatly alone. Jesus knew both of these lonelinesses. He sought the solitude of the seashore and of the mountain-top and of the olive garden. He accepted the loneliness of His character, saying even among His disciples, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." But this third loneliness of shame He shrank from, as all men shrink from it. "I was . . . . sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not," said Jesus in His parable, declaring the loneliness of shame. "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." "Let this cup pass from me," prayed Jesus. Yet He drank it.—*W. M. Clow.*

Wednesday, 5th. Matthew xxvii. 1-31.

Ver. 24. Pilate excused himself to himself for wrongdoing on the ground that policy and self-defense forced him to his act. He could say "I am innocent" because he said, "I am obliged to connive at this crime." Though in his case the plea is for a gigantic sin, and in our case it may be for a comparatively small one, the same sort of thing is being said by us continually. There is *nothing* necessary for a man which he can only get or keep by tampering with conscience. There are two things needful for us: God and righteousness; and there is no third.

And in another way, the pleading of compulsion from without, as an excuse for evil, is evidently vain; because no man and no thing can force us to do wrong. We know, in each specific case, that, however strong the temptation may have been, we could have resisted it if we would, and that therefore the yielding to it was our act and ours only.

Notice here the possibility of entire self-deception. This man had managed to persuade himself, on a very rotten plea, that he was entirely free from guilt in his act. And the fact that the man who did the most awful of crimes—though perhaps he was not the most guilty—could do it with the profession, to some extent sincere, of innocence, may teach us very solemn lessons. You can persuade yourself that almost any wrong thing is right, if only you desire to do so. Inclination can silence conscience. The rush of passion can silence conscience. The very stress of daily life tends to weaken the power of pronouncing moral judgment on the things that we are doing. We all have sins altogether unsuspected by ourselves. There are plenty of us that do just as Pilate—who condemned himself in saying, "I am innocent of the blood."

Pilate probably went back to Cæsarea after the feast, thinking that he had got well out of what threatened to be an awkward business; and in all likelihood he never thought any more either about that strange Prisoner, or about that stormy session in the Hall of Judgment. We have not to measure his guilt. It depends upon his knowledge, and his knowledge was very slight. But, for all that, one cannot help thinking of the shock of surprise which struck him when he passed beyond life, and ceased to be a governor and a judge, and stood at the bar of the Man Whom he had condemned.

The same reversal of present and future estimates will come about with many of us. That fierce light which flashes from the throne will show the seaminess of many a life which looks fairly well by the candle-light of this present.—*Alexander Maclaren.*

Thursday, 6th. Matthew xxvii. 32-66.

Ver. 46. What do these words mean? We cannot explain that cry as a momentary failing of human courage or human conviction. Every line of the Gospel forbids us to do so.

Think of His Name and why He bore it. "Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." He Who was "in the form of God" could not be happy in heaven while the cry of the world which He had created was beating upon His ears. He had spoken often and not in vain, through Prophets and Psalmists and holy men, and now the time had come for the last supreme appeal, the sovereign proof that what He bade His people be He was Himself. And therefore He went forth and "took upon him the form of a servant, ... and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He went forth and He went down. He could save; but only by going down, with His Divine nature upon Him, into the very depths of the world; by getting under all the evil, and lifting it up with the strength of His own shoulders, and the suffering of His own body, soul, and spirit.

Now how far did He go down? He had suffered whatever man can suffer, betrayal by a friend and disciple, denial by the chief of His Apostles, degrading insults and bodily anguish, such as we shrink from putting into words. And now at the last came those jeering priests. And He must have asked Himself, What are these men? and where are they? And be-

yond the indifference of the ignorant and careless, beyond the cowardice of timid friends, beyond the animal cruelty of rough soldiers, beyond and below all this, He must have seen and entered a lower depth still—the mind of those who knew or ought to know, who had read their Bibles, who thought themselves the chosen people of God, and yet could crucify their Christ, and then could mock and jibe with the vilest of the vile at the foot of the Cross—the mind of those who are in the outer darkness, hating the light. For one black moment He became as they, that He might be able to save even them.

Then came that loud cry, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." "It is finished"—a loud triumphant cry. God is the Father again, the horrible vision has passed, and the end has come.

It is horrible; and yet it is the condition of power and success. For what is the horror? It is the sense of God's absence, the feeling of abandonment in the outer darkness. And who can feel that except those who know what God's presence means? Only those who have tasted of love, joy, and peace can understand what evil is. Others may see the outward symptoms of evil, the squalor, the vice, the hopelessness; they alone know the root of the disease, and therefore the way to cure it.—*Charles Bigg.*

Friday, 7th. Matthew xxviii.

Ver. 5. How much more do the angels know? If they know anything, they may know something more; they may be better acquainted with us than we suppose. We must be of interest to them because we are of interest to their God. The angels are inquirers, students; they desire to look into the meaning of the blood.

It is an angel who speaks in this most tender text. "I know that ye seek Jesus." This is in striking contrast to something that is also related in the context—to the great earthquake. Man is never so helpless as in an earthquake. God keeps the earthquake for special occasions. The sturdiest man amongst us withers away when he feels the earth rocking. The angel answered and said unto the women, "It is different with you, you have no need to fear—'for I know that ye seek Jesus.'" They who seek Jesus need never tremble; earthquake, or no earthquake, their sanctuary is safe.

The difference between the people who fear spiritual presences and the people who do not fear them and rather welcome them, is this: the one people seek the sepulchre, the other seek the Christ. There are many people who have no objection to the sepulchre, there are travelers who go long distances in order to see the sepulchre who would not move an inch to see the Saviour. Such men are lovers of form, special places, extraordinary ceremonies. To see the sepulchre is what they desire; they would be afraid if they saw Him Who had lain in it but some three days ago.

Some seek Christ as an ideal. Ideal is the favorite word of the ecclesiastical hour; in fact, it is the idol-word of the political hour as well. Some seek Christ as an ideal, a novelty in poetry, a variety in intellectual life. Jesus Christ is enrolled and honored and invited to a very high place in the pantheon, and He is told that this seat, this throne of ivory, is His own. He is regarded as an ideal. What did the angel say? He spoke other language, he spoke in accordance with tragic facts; the air was still hot with the terrible tragedy, and the angel caught its spirit and expressed it in a word. He said, "I know ye seek Jesus"—yes, but what Jesus? the ideal, poetic, transcendental Jesus? No—"I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified." That is His title; do not abbreviate it, do not corrupt it by excision; it will bleed to death if you do not give the full style, title, and address of the Son of God. "Jesus, which was crucified"—the Man in Whose palms the nails were driven and on Whose brow the thorns were enwreathed; I know the Christ you are seeking; you know Him by blood marks. That is the Christ we have too much forgotten. We are admirers, but not believers. Drop your admiration, and get back to living faith in Him Who was crucified.—*Joseph Parker.*

Saturday, 8th. Mark i.

Ver. 10-12. People actually wonder how Jesus Christ, if He were what we believe Him to have been, could possibly have been subject to temptation. They talk as if the Divine Sonship would make everything easy, and would render impossible the strain and anxiety which are the notes of our real humanity. The Sonship creates the conditions of temptation.

What have we to do, we may ask, with temptation such as His? We have to do with it just so far as we are religious and spiritual persons, and no farther. We all, for instance, if we have made the slightest effort to be religious, know that swift, secret, sinister appearance of egotism inside our religion, which was the note of our Lord's first temptation. He was tempted to let His spiritual force be turned aside from His dedication to God in order to play round His own self-consciousness, and satisfy His wants, and increase His own self-importance. If He is Son of God, why not feed Himself? "Self," it is always self. Self whispering to us out of our prayers, in our sacraments, through our best intentions, in our very efforts, perhaps, of watching and praying and fasting.

We are so full of spiritual concerns, and yet, are we all the time doing anything else but turning stones into bread, feeding our own satisfactions? And then, our vanity, our silliness. Religious people are so silly. Our unreality, our insincerity! We are always tossing ourselves off some pinnacle of the temple, in freaks of impulse, weak loss of control, in insolent desire to surprise, in stupid disregard of real, honest, working facts.

The terrible third temptation haunts the very best, with its readiness to make use of doubtful and dangerous means in order to secure a good end. The better the end, the sharper the temptation. And if the end be God's kingdom on earth, the temptation is at its strongest. For the end is so high that it seems to justify almost anything.

Do such faults as these seem small and unimportant infirmities to us? Yet, it was in this type of sin that our Lord detected the heart of evil. When at any time you find yourself tempted to think these swerves of the will to be slight and unimportant, remember that lone Figure in the wilderness with the wild beasts, warring hard against the pressure of evil until He is faint and hungry.—*H. Scott Holland.*

Sunday, 9th. Mark ii.

Ver. 1. "It was noised that he was in the house." Jesus Christ did not come noiselessly into the world; so far as He Himself was concerned, there was little or no noise, but the moment it was hinted that He was in the world-house, the earth, a visible manifestation of the invisible Deity, there was noise enough, musical noise, a great multitudinous acclaim. There are some times when people cannot be silent; indeed, there are some times when silence would be a species of blasphemy.

It was noised, not only that He was in the world, but presently that He was the foremost Man in the world. In a sense the only Man, because without Him there could be no life. People began to say concerning Jesus, "Never man spake like this man." He became the pronoun that stood for the only noun there is, the Deity.

It was noised that He was in the house and the world; that He was not only in the house-world or world-house, but that He stood alone in it and gradually drew away from all other men that He might ascend the throne which He created. But in a sweet domestic sense it is often noised that He is in the family circle, in the little house, in our house where the cradle is, and where the little schoolbooks are scattered about, and where the aged folks are that are now wondering what there is just across the river.

Is it noised that Jesus Christ is in our house? What do they say? They say, knowing our family life, that Jesus is in that house because of its order, its temper, its resignation, its whole method and economy of existence; they say that only the presence of Jesus Christ in that house could have made such a death. There never was a deathbed scene like it except under the same circumstances, the same deep consciouness of the same majestic and tender Personality.

One day it will be noised that He is on the throne. Tempest shall tell it to tempest, and ocean to ocean, and world to world, and planet to planet; and there shall go forth a great, grand, solemn cry, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." And they shall cry in every tongue, Hallelujah! and Bethlehem shall culminate in heaven.—*Joseph Parker.*

Monday, 10th. Mark iii.

Ver. 4. This is one of the instances of Christ's power of subtle and at first sight unperceived retort. Have you really collated into one radiant conspectus the answers of Christ to the people who wished to take Him by guile or otherwise? You would make quite a little Bible if you were to collate all those happy and even thrilling instances of Christ's power in retort, in sending back in another form that which had been flung at Him by hostile hands. He was great in asking questions, and peculiarly great in reply. His replies were always on the spur of the moment, He never took any time to consider what answer He would make to anybody.

Let us look into this case a little further, and see how it touches us. Learn first that a man may break the law—say, the Sabbath—in the very act of ostentatiously keeping it. You can only keep the Sabbath in the heart, you can only keep it in penitence and in thankfulness; it can only be kept in its own spirit, which is a spirit of peace and meekness, restfulness and love. Christ's Resurrection Day cannot be kept by finding fault with the way in which other people keep it. When we enter into these deeper sympathies and realizations of the Divine Spirit we shall have a cleansed world.

A man may dishonor the Bible in the very act of ostentatiously believing that every dot, every comma, is the punctuation of the almost visible Divine hand. The Bible is alive. You may have taken off its coat or patched it here and there with some historic or syntactical patching, and the coat may be none the worse for it, but the revelation is still alive, the truth is still as energetic in the Bible as it ever was. He honors, keeps, the Bible who finds its truth, its Gospel, its mighty blood, and holds them up as the ministries and evidences of God. We owe nothing to ig-

norance. Ignorance is only pardonable when it knows that it is ignorant and wants to be instructed, refined, and ennobled.

See then how we are driven back, back into the spirituality of religion. The true religion is not a certificate which you take out annually; the true faith is not a renewal of your registration at a guinea a year: it is something that belongs to the soul, the very soul of the soul, so that religion is an affair between man and God, between God and man, away among the unspeakables, away among the saddest, gladdest ministries. We may keep the letter, and deny the spirit. We may have the Book, but not the revelation; a beautifully bound Bible, but no spirit Bible, no spirit Gospel, singing to us and teaching us and helping us along all the way of life.—*Joseph Parker.*

Tuesday, 11th. Mark iv.

Ver. 26-29. The beginning of religious life is always an awakening to the greatness that underlies the littleness of our ordinary existence. Christianity was just the greatest of all such awakenings of mankind to the true meaning of life.

It is the more remarkable that Jesus Christ, Who is in one sense the greatest Revolutionist the world ever saw, should so constantly present spiritual life to us, not as the inroad upon our being of something entirely new, but simply as an awakening to something that was always there; not as a sudden revolutionary change by which the link between the past and present was snapped, but simply as the further development and manifestation of a principle which was working in human life and history from its first beginning.

And this view of the development of Christianity out of the past is naturally accompanied by a similar view of its future. Several of the parables of the kingdom of God are parables of evolution, in which processes of the spiritual life are compared to the organic processes of nature. We have here a parable which, perhaps more fully than any of the others, brings before us the idea of a spiritual evolution in all its various aspects. By the illustration of the growth of the wheat to the harvest, it calls attention, on the one hand, to the quietness, continuity and naturalness of the process whereby spiritual life is developed, which makes it almost entirely escape notice while it is going on; and, on the other hand, to the wonderful transforming power of that process, which we discover when, after a time, we compare the later with the earlier stages of it. A man or a society of men sow the seeds of good and evil, conscious of the particular acts they do, but taking no thought of the enormous agencies they are setting in motion. Their minds at the time are occupied with special pleasures or with the gains they think they are making, but they do not attach any great importance to their acts; and, afterwards, they take no thought of what they have done, or perhaps forget all about it. But the spiritual world, like the natural, has its laws of growth, and slowly but certainly within the man or the nation, the seed ripens to the fruit. Inevitably the good or evil act lays the train for the good or evil tendency, and the good or evil tendency spreads out its influence till it permeates the whole life, moulding all the habits, all the manifold ways of thinking or acting, till the development and organization of character in the individual or the nation surprise us with the full-grown harvest of justice or injustice, salvation or moral ruin.—*E. Caird.*

Wednesday, 12th. Mark v.

Ver. 18. Why did Jesus refuse the man's request? Partly for the world's sake and partly for the man's own. "Go," said Jesus, "to thy house, to thine own people, and tell them all that the Lord, in pity, hath done for thee." The saved man has to be in his turn, a saviour, or at least a preacher. Anything that he knows about Jesus, those who are dear to him should know too. "Go home to thy friends, and tell *them.*" Upon the man who has been redeemed, who has passed from insanity to soundness of mind, from lonely misery to fullness of joy, lies the obligation to tell the story to those whom he can influence, first to those of his own household, and then to those beyond it; for if a man has been healed by the shores of the Sea of Galilee, then Decapolis has a right to know about it too. Life upon the mountains and among the tombs is no more possible for such an one: he must go with his message among the men who need it. The new power which Jesus has brought into his life is not only for himself but for them. Inspiration has to be translated into action, knowledge and power into service. The work for which he was redeemed will not be done if he sits at Jesus' feet. So, for the world's sake, Jesus says, "Go."

But no less for the man's sake. He has to learn that the power which redeemed him can keep him, whether the bodily presence of Jesus is near him or not. Perhaps, like many men, he was anxiously dependent upon a visible support to his faith; and the gracious Jesus, Who loved him better than he knew, deliberately sent him away, that he might learn the true meaning of spiritual religion. "Go . . . . and tell . . . . how great things the Lord hath done." The Lord was the Lord of all the earth, and everywhere He might be found. When Jesus entered into His boat, and was lost to sight across the lake, the power which He represented did not vanish with Him;

and Jesus wished to bring home to this redeemed but anxious soul, that the Divine resources were always at the disposal of the man who trusted them—alike upon the sea and land, upon the valleys and the hills, in the crowded city and on the waste and desolate place where no man is. God and His power and His love are everywhere.—*John E. McFadyen.*

Thursday, 13th. Mark vi.

Ver. 31. There are two ways of looking at life, and there are two ways of living. The one attracts but does not satisfy. The other satisfies while it attracts. The former, which is the natural, is broad and shallow. The latter, which is the spiritual, is not less wide, but it is deep. In the one case the man begins with observation and ends in criticism, spending himself in busy activity till there is nothing left but self-disgust. In the other an ever growing sympathy expands into the life and love of God.

The life of prayer—the only real and true life—is one that springs from a profound sympathy with the universe, which sees in the great order of which we form a part not only the length and the breadth, but also, and much more vividly, the depth.

The man of prayer is he whose work in the world is the stronger because it manifests the sense of God's nearness; who, always busy, is yet ever at rest; about whom the casual stranger feels that there is a background, a hidden life, a fountain of living water from wells of salvation that our father Jacob gave us not.

And the men of prayer teach their brethren that which is the hardest, while it is the truest lesson of life: how to die. Why is it that we are so slow to learn the secret of Jesus? When He has bidden us watch and pray; when He has begged that for His sake we will give Him one last hour, He comes and finds us sleeping, for our eyes are heavy and the flesh is weak.

And yet it is just for these supreme moments that Christ came into the world. He came, that out of the deep of our human character He might cry to the Father in that perfectness of unbroken communion, wherein prayer gathers itself up into words that are the expression of a life—"Thy will be done." Not once nor twice in that career of tireless activity did He go away and pray, saying again the same words. For Jesus' life meant not to do but to be, not to live but to die. Jesus Christ did most for the world when He was doing nothing. The finished work of Christ is not the bustle of a great activity, but the peace of a surrendered life.—*J. G. Simpson.*

Friday, 14th. Mark vii.

Ver. 34. Jesus sighed when He said "Ephphatha"—He sighed at the new possibilities of temptation, suffering, and sin that He was conferring by opening channels to a mind that had hitherto been closed, and empowering a tongue hitherto silent, but in spite of the sigh He spoke the Ephphatha. Whatever the risk, the gift must be given that the end may be attained.

I think that we have in this consideration the assurance of the unconditional responsibility of Almighty God for the final consummation of His purpose upon each one of us. He knew how much the gift of life would cost us. He did not give it frivolously and carelessly. He gave it because of the magnificent result that He purposes from it. And this knowledge, in our higher moods, should encourage us in unquestioning submission to His blessed will, even when it seems most sharply to cross our human will.

Jesus is unceasingly saying "Ephphatha" to every human soul. He is saying, "Be opened," to those dormant faculties of our spiritual nature which we have overlaid with the flesh. The circumstances of the daily life of each one of us provide the medium through which the call comes. But we are not automata, we are not machines; and constantly the sigh of the Divine Humanity is intensified by our miserable human perversity, which enables us to go on hardening ourselves year after year against the influence of the God within us.

Human goodness, or character, is like the beauty that you admire in a flower; it is from within and not from without. You cannot make a flower beautiful by paint and enamel; you cannot make a life beautiful by external moralities and austerities and the like—the beauty that is on the flower was in the flower first. The sun shining in its own power speaks the "Ephphatha, ... Be opened," to the bud, and it obeys. And when that bud opens, when that Divine potentiality begins to spring within you, when those aspirations are felt struggling, when the heart, half-shrinkingly, turns Godward, when it recognizes fitfully the truth of Divine Sonship, when it begins to say,

> "My Jesus, I love Thee,
> I know Thou art mine,"

must not its capacities be stimulated and its life be fed? If you could see through a very powerful microscope the surface of a leaf, you would find that it was covered with tiny mouths, with lips like human lips seizing the invisible carbonic acid gas from sunbeam and air, and incorporating it into itself. It is as though the sunbeam had said to the flower, "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me." Similarly, the will, forcing the spirit upwards, drinks in and absorbs the life of God.

Finally, every opened flower speaks its Ephphatha to all that is around it; it appeals to the sense of beauty and to the sense of smell. And so every opened heart must be lifted above timidity, fear of criticism, moral cowardice, and must strive to help others. The first law of a converted soul is effort for the brethren.—*Basil Wilberforce.*

Saturday, 15th. Mark viii.

Ver. 12. The Pharisees had asked Christ for a sign from heaven—that is to say, a sign from the sky. It was as if they had said: "We see a great deal of bodily healing by Your hand. Yet, after all, there is nothing supernatural in bodily healing. We all know that mind has influence over body—that faith can strengthen the physical, that hope can aid health, that love can cure lassitude, that novelty can divert from nerves. All this happens quite naturally. But let us see You arrest a star, let us behold You turn the course of a planet, let us witness You bringing the rain after drought or the sunshine after rain, and then we shall believe in You."

Now where lay the sting of this to Jesus; what was there in it that made Him sigh in spirit? Was it because men doubted His power to work a sign in heaven? No; it was because they attributed His benevolence to the desire of working a sign upon *earth.* Such an imputation would make *any* philanthropist sigh. Imagine a child meeting with an accident when a doctor was passing and that the doctor offered his services. Imagine that the next morning a paragraph appeared in the newspaper stating that he offered his help with a view to manifest his medical skill. Would not this physician feel that he had been misrepresented in character and depreciated in the moral scale?

That is an exact parallel. When Jesus saw an accident in the streets of life He offered His services; but He did not offer His services as a proof of His Messianic skill. He offered them because He could not help it. He brought succor, not to show that He was master of Divine power, but because the sorrows of human nature mastered *Him.* He was never more passive than in His acts of healing. Our calamities overwhelmed Him. His charities taught a lesson, but He did not *bestow* them to teach a lesson. He bestowed them to ease His own pain. Cana's poverty made Him uncomfortable. Bethany's grief bowed Him. The leper's fate lacerated Him. The demoniac's cry disturbed Him. The task of the toilers tired Him. The burdens of the worldly wearied Him. The pain of Dives' thirst parched Him. The remorse of Magdalene marred His visage. He gave because He must.—*George Matheson.*

Sunday, 16th. Mark ix.

Ver. 20. This invalid only knew himself to be a weakling when he saw Jesus. There is nothing which rends the spirit like the sight of a high ideal. Spiritual stagnancy is the result of a low standard. There is a phrase we often hear: "He is on very good terms with himself." We apply it to a man who has never had any rending of the spirit. I can never be on bad terms with myself as long as there is only one man within me. If in my heart there hangs the picture of a second self, a higher self, a self which mimics my errors and tells me how things ought to be done—if there is in my soul a man who sings after me the song I have spoiled, reads after me the piece I have ruined, performs after me the service I have poorly rendered—that presence makes me small. It puts me on bad terms with myself—on wrestling terms, the terms on which Jacob stood with his angel.

It will not in the least soothe my struggle to know that I am the first man in the company, in the village, or even in the kingdom. There was not a man of his day so good as Jacob—he was the chosen patriarch of God. But he was far below his angel—the ideal of what he would like to have been. It was his angel that made him miserable.

When Paul met a storm at sea, the men of Malta said he must be a bad man. We are all apt to feel like the men of Malta. When we see a storm-tossed spirit toiling with its own waves and battling with its own breezes, we say, Surely he is a child of the darkness! We are wrong; he is a child of the light. It is only because he is a child of the light that he wrestles with the deep. He felt no discord till he heard the music. He knew no midnight till he saw the morning. He dreamed not of his mean attire till he gazed on the seamless robe. He got his cross from Christ, his ladenness from light, his burden from seeing beauty.—*George Matheson.*

Monday, 17th. Mark x.

Ver. 20, 21. These are the words of that young man who won the love of Jesus before he had embraced the cause of Jesus. It is something to know that one can win the love of Christ before he calls himself a Christian—that the Divine eye recognizes a virtue conferred by nature as well as a virtue derived from grace.

The question the young man asked was really this: In what respect does Christianity differ from the Ten Commandments? What is there in Your doctrine that can give it a more permanent life than can be claimed by these precepts of Moses? He tells Jesus that, so far as his consciousness goes, he has kept undeviat-

ingly the law of these commandments. He asks what more can be wanted to make him a Christian.

The answer of Christ is striking: "Go, ... sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor." If we would see its significance, we must look at the spirit, and not the mere form of the words. Let me try to paraphrase what our Lord means: "You say you have given to every one his due. It is well; I admit your integrity in this respect. But is this the measure of all possible integrity? Is it the climax of goodness when a man can say that he has rendered to every one his due? It is the climax of *justice;* but is justice the highest step on the ladder of goodness? No; there is a step beyond justice—generosity. It is not enough that you give to your brother what he has a legal right to; you must impart to him that to which he has no legal right. You have done well to respect his person, to keep your hands from his property, to abstain from calumniating his name. But after all, that is only a *refraining* of the hand. Is there to be no outstretching of the hand?

"Are you content with doing your brother no wrong? Is there no good that you can do him? You have not killed your brother; but have you enlarged his life? You have not stolen; but have you added to his store? You have not defamed; but have you spread his virtues? You have brought him no domestic dispeace; but have you brought him domestic joy? You have refused to covet his possessions; but have you ever coveted possessions *for him?* If not, there remaineth for you a rest that is still unachieved."—*Selected.*

Tuesday, 18th. Mark xi.

Ver. 11. What was it that Jesus Christ saw in the Temple? What was it that He determined to cleanse on that day of His wrath which was coming, that day which began with the withered fig tree and ended with flying barterers, overturned counters, scattered sheep and oxen?

He saw *meaningless formalism.* The sheep and oxen were in the Temple courts for a religious purpose, and the changers were there that nothing but the Temple shekel might intrude upon the reverence due to holy things, and yet Jesus Christ turns out both one and the other. Why is it? There is nothing to compare with the irreverence of habit when we let religion get into a mechanical groove to such an extent that we lose all sense of the object of our religious worship. Surely it has reached the height of irony when He to Whom all worship pointed, He Who was the true Lamb of God, He Who initiated and appointed the service of the Temple for Himself, must stand there alone and unknown in His Temple, and He to Whom Israel looked as their Peace should be constrained to visit Israel only in wrath.

His eye lightens on a more positive insult still to His Father's house. The sheep and the oxen, as they herded together in the Temple courts, were a living proof that the Jew had forgotten the great *reverence* due to holy places and holy things.

We feel we must ask ourselves with some earnestness, Does He trace in my worship itself that reverence which He ought to find for the presence of God and the honor of His holy house? We do not drive out the sheep and oxen of unworthy, wandering, irreverent thoughts which prevent our worship because we do not really feel the presence of God.

But besides the irreverence which profanes the sanctuary, our Lord, as He gazes round the magnificent Temple, cannot but have seen the sight, painful to His holy eyes, of men who had *grown away from religion,* men in whom religion contributed nothing to the solid welfare of their life, but rather, stood outside it: railed off, shut in, like some church in a busy city rarely used, and thinly attended, by worshipers. It must have stood out with a sharp and ghastly contrast before the eyes of Christ on this Palm Sunday evening—the sacrifice of the whole burnt offering, symbolizing the exhaustion of God's wrath on sin; the trespass offering as if to do away with the recurrent burden of sin; the peace offering of a soul at peace with God, this was the meaning of the oxen, and the sheep, and of the doves for purification—this on the one hand; and on the other, there were the loose lives, the broken morality, the cruelty, the deceit, the injustice, the inability to recognize the higher life. Everything to symbolize, and to effect the complete extirpation of sin, with sin scientifically encamped in high places before the very forces which were meant to overthrow it.

Is our religion touching our life? This is the vital question for us all. Christ surely looks from the Temple to the life, from the life to the Temple, to see in life sin pursued with an exhaustion of hatred until it is consumed, to see the soul gradually gaining peace with God through Jesus Christ.—*W. C. E. Newbolt.*

Wednesday, 19th. Mark xii.

Ver. 12. Towards the very end of our great Master's ministry, He seems, almost of set purpose, to come to quite close quarters with the various recognized authorities of His own Jewish Church, as well as with the self-constituted authority of its various parties.

His object, I take it, was twofold. First, He must assert the supremacy of Divine principle over human rule, and secondly,

He must be the Divine Champion on behalf of humanity of its own responsible mental and moral freedom.

He is not afraid of human nature, though He is "grieved for the hardness of their hearts." He challenges it to come out into the open away from all mere temporary expedients and mechanical rules. He even challenges by His actions conventional authority, conventional opinions, views, and prejudices. There is a suspicion of a mighty claim as He faces Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians, and their current, highly reputable, yet self-centered rules of life and ways of thought and action.

And in the rule of life and service to Himself, and, on His behalf, to humanity, there is the same avoidance of all party formulas and party definitions. He strikes home to the very heart of humanity from the Heart of Divinity. "Preach the gospel to every creature"—we might also say to "all creation."

In each parable we hear a Voice behind the voice, a mystic note within the music, that attracts without violence and subdues without force, until we find our own souls answering. We, too, perceive, like the Pharisees, that He has spoken this parable against ourselves.

And each time the Voice comes home to conscience as a final issue, as an eternal principle. The Divine Master, the consummate Teacher, the Good Physician, the Eternal Wisdom of God has cut clean through our sophistries, swept aside our partialities, torn off the soothing poultice of self-flattery and opened the wound itself, the wound of pride, and let out the deadly matter, and pours in the wine of penitential grace and the healing unction of His forgiveness; and brings us by His own transporting grace to the House of Rest, where He leaves us His own Incarnate life and the virtue of that life, in sacramental, healing, strengthening, perfecting power; and yet so greatly does He respect our moral freedom that this glory of a perfect life only results—so far as we coöperate in faith and effort. The Pharisees, mask-wearers—as all are tempted to be—recognizing the Voice of Eternal Truth, avoided it; perceiving the final issue laid at their feet, yet spurned it, and "left him, and went their way" into the outer darkness.—*Bishop Gaul.*

Thursday, 20th. Mark xiii.

Ver. 1. It stands out clearly in our story that Jesus did not care for the titanic stones on which the Jewish Temple rested. They were crying out to the disciples of man's power over matter, and the disciples were full of wonder at it, but Jesus did not care for it. There was a higher, fuller power of man, another conquest of the world which these men had missed, and, because of their missing that, this mere material triumph did not interest or move Him. He prophesied how transitory it was all to prove, and so passed on and left it.

We need to know that that is always true. It is something which we who call ourselves the servants of Jesus Christ have no right ever to forget—that He never is impressed by merely material success or power any more than He was when He saw them in Jerusalem. It was not what He came into the world to bring to pass.

Christ *does* value the material, but always with an outlook beyond it to the spiritual. If we keep this in view, I think we may believe, with the profoundest reverence, that there is no work upon material things faithfully done by man which God does not look upon with pleasure. Thoroughness and beauty are the two excellent qualities of man's work upon material things. God is the Creator, and if in the creation we can read anything of the Creator, these two dispositions, thoroughness and beauty, must lie at the very center of His Being; for they everywhere pervade the world that He has made.

No man can read the Gospels and not catch the tone of such a sympathy as proves that wherever the eye of Christ fell upon any man in Palestine who in those days was doing thorough or beautiful work in any department of activity, the Man of men honored him for it and rejoiced in it. Do not think of Him Who brought our nature to its best as being totally estranged from those things which ninety-nine hundredths of our race are doing all the time. Think of Him as caring for it all, as caring for what they did and for what you are doing; but always as being preserved from the slavery of material things by two principles which were absolutely despotic and invariable with Him—the principle that no material thing was entirely satisfactory unless it could reveal some spiritual usefulness, and the principle that if any material thing, however beautiful, hindered any spirituality, there should be no hesitation about sacrificing it. Look at those two principles. See if they did not both absolutely rule in Christ, and see if they are not just what we need to save us from the tyranny of material things.—*Phillips Brooks.*

Friday, 21st. Mark xiv.

Ver. 26. Olivet took its name from the olive trees which grew in luxuriant abundance upon its slopes. The Jews also called it the Mountain of Three Lights.

Strangely enough, too, the oil obtained from the olive trees had, in ancient time, a triple significance—that of sacredness, strength, and light. More important still

is the truth, as Ruskin puts it, that "the chief Agonia of humanity, and the chief giving of strength from heaven for its fulfilment" were worked out under the night shade of the olives. For Christ's agony in the Garden has endowed the human race with entirely new ideas of sacredness, strength, and light.

Sacredness. The oil from the olive trees was used for purposes of sacred anointing. Christ's agony under the olives bequeathed to men a fresh and revolutionary conception of the inspiring sacredness of the human soul. Since Christ in His matchless sorrow raised to His lips the brimming cup of man's iniquity, we may rest assured that each one of us is of the greatest value to Him. The intensity of His Passion is the measure, on the one hand, of man's sin; on the other hand, of the greatness of redeeming love. And the revelation of that love bequeathed a new conception of the sacredness of life. Suffering is then seen to be the refining process—the method by which the sacred life finds its highest realization.

Strength. A second use for the oil was found in the gymnasiums. Hence the olive tree became also an emblem of strength. But how does the agony of Christ convey a message of strength? Never was there such a wrestling in prayer as in the Garden, and never was there such a victory won. And it conveys a message of strength to us because it reveals the unlimited resources that await the beseechings of prayer. Christ therefore has shown us, where, and how, to obtain strength in our Gethsemane trials, by Himself leading us to the supreme source of all power. Your season of anguish is your period of opportunity.

Light. The oil procured from the olive trees was also used for purposes of illumination. The oil for the Temple lamps was brought from the Mount of Olives. Hence the olive trees became also an emblem of light. But how does that awful gloom of the agony suggest a lesson in light? I think it is in this wise. When the surging multitude invaded the sanctuary of the Master's devotions, and the profane signal of Judas had been given, Jesus stepped forth and confronted the throng. Then we read, "They went backward, and fell to the ground." What caused the retreat? It was the sudden vision of that Face, gleaming with the pure light of heaven. The faces of men who walk and talk with God are lit up with the glowing reflection of Divine beauty.—*W. Gilbert.*

Saturday, 22nd. Mark xv. 1-21.

Ver. 21. Mark the greatness of the service Simon did for Jesus. As often as our thoughts are true and our love to Jesus rises in flood, we all have a blameless envy of those who did Him service. We know no distinction to compare with theirs. The women who ministered to Him; Martha, who made Him a supper; Mary, who poured her spikenard over His head; Joseph, who gave Him a grave, stand out above all the benefactors of men. All the preëminences and attainments of time are less than vanity compared to theirs. But if you will give rank to the services rendered to Jesus, if you will pitch upon the greatest deed done for Him—next to that supreme office of the woman who nursed Him in her bosom—easily first of all is this deed of Simon in bearing His Cross. To this day the greatest service to be done for Christ is to carry His Cross.

Mark the greatness of Simon's reward. Christ never allowed any honor paid to Him, or any service done to Him to pass unrewarded. When a village girl asked Him to her wedding feast, He turned the water into wine. When a humble home offered Him hospitality on the Sabbath Day, He touched its mistress, and expelled her fever. When a Samaritan gave Him a draught from the well, He gave her to drink of the Living Water. When a poor, abandoned, city waif stooped to kiss His feet, He sent her out with a blessing of peace. No cup of cold water given to Christ ever lost its reward. And this preeminent service done by Simon enjoyed its great reward.

What was that reward? It was the deepest desire of his heart. Perhaps you say it was his own salvation. There is little doubt that he became Christ's disciple. It would have been contrary, both to nature and to grace, that any man should come so near Jesus, and should do so much for Him, and not be called into His kingdom. But as I read the Evangelists, I conceive that Simon's reward was greater than the saving of his own soul. It was the answer of his most instant and constant and urgent prayers. Away in Cyrene this pilgrim to the Holy City had left two little sons, and as he looked upon them, exiles from the land of Israel, as he taught them the fear of the God of Jacob, the very passion of his heart was distilled into prayer that they might grow in the faith and obedience of God. Christ saw the names Rufus and Alexander graven on Simon's heart. And the great reward was given to Simon of seeing both his sons known and loved and honored in the Church of Christ. As I read a father's heart, I do not know whether he was prouder of the deed done for Jesus, or of the holy fame of being the father of Alexander and Rufus.—*W. M. Clow.*

Sunday, 23rd. Mark xv. 22-47.

Ver. 32. "That we may see and believe"; here you have a pack of men who are setting up their own standard of evi-

dence. What a proud "we" was that; what a blind "see" was that; what an impossible "believe" was that! Observe their line of reasoning: they charged Jesus Christ to do something of their own fixing in order that *they* might see and believe. They would arrest the universe in order that they might get a first-class seat upon any chariot that was driving towards the gratification of selfish conceit and desire. Were they so anxious to see and believe that they would call upon God to arrest the sun and the moon upon the hills of time? Certainly not; they were not anxious to believe, they did not want to believe, but they wanted to gratify a conceit or to satisfy a fancy or an ambition; they wanted to create a new anecdote, saying "We said, if He would come down from the Cross we would see it and believe Him"; and God sent upon them a great negative, a contemptuous denial. None can be so deaf as God. We must take care how we set up our own little schools of evidence and our small little bodies of apologies for the Deity of Christ and the redeeming efficacy of His Cross.

We cannot stop at any one definition of evidence, even if God were to grant it to us. He would not satisfy us, He would awaken and provoke a still keener and fouler temptation.

The eye never saved a soul, the eye is a poor instrument at best; the human may probably be the very poorest of eyes in the higher classes of animals. There is a way which the eagle knoweth not, and "there is a path which . . . . the vulture's eye hath not seen," and there are paths and ways and courses of development which no human eye can see; it is the soul that sees.

Jesus Christ never did respond to any test set by the enemy, set by anybody. He does not accept suggestions, He reveals truths. Christ never fell into an intellectual mantrap; He laid down the law, He expounded the kingdom, He spoke in the imperative; in the subjunctive or the potential He could not speak, He was free of all that limited and hesitant grammar. Did Jesus Christ accept the suggestion of the enemy in the wilderness? He said—what a philosophy it was that He spake in that grand retort! "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God": a new conception of life, an enlargement of our limited view of bread, of substance, of tables and dinings. Christ in effect swept all these out of the way, saying, "Man shall live by every word, every kind of method Divinely conceived and Divinely provided: away!"—*Joseph Parker.*

Monday, 24th. Mark xvi.

Ver. 19. The story of the Ascension of Jesus is given three times in the New Testament. All three accounts are marked by a certain reticence and reverent brevity. The Ascension is the natural and inevitable completion of the Resurrection. When Jesus rose from the dead on the morning of the third day, it was not to resume the old life He had led before dying. You remember when Mary recognized Jesus in the Garden her first impulse was to clasp her dear Lord's feet. She thought that now Jesus had come back to them from the dead the conditions that existed before His dying would be restored also. But Jesus gently and lovingly corrects her. "Touch me not;" He said, "for I am not yet ascended to my Father." Mary's arms were flung in affectionate embrace around her Lord as if to retain Him, as if to say, "You shall never leave us more." But Jesus had not risen from the grave simply to resume His old life, however gracious and beautiful that may have been. He had risen from the dead in order to enter into glory. His reward for becoming "obedient unto death" was to be exalted, and to be "given . . . . a name which is above every name." He only delayed His entrance upon this life until His disciples were convinced that He was not dead, but *alive.* He remained forty days with them; appearing now to one, now to another; now to two, as they walked together to a country village; now to the whole company of disciples in the Upper Room; and again in Galilee to about five hundred brethren at once. He showed them His hands and His feet; He talked with them, He ate with them, until the most incredulous were convinced and even Thomas believed, and their doubt and despair had given away to radiant hope and dauntless courage. And having done that, "He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." What a day that must have been in heaven when Christ came back again, glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength! —*J. D. Jones.*

Tuesday, 25th. Luke i.

Ver. 30, 31. We can never forget that Mary was "blessed . . . . among women" in that she was chosen to be the channel by which the Incarnation of the Son of God was to be effected. We reverence her purity and we admire the beauty of her character. When we think of the greatness conferred upon womanhood in the Incarnation it should lead all men—should it not? —to cultivate habits of chivalry and grace in all their dealings with women. But let us not forget that the Church centers our attention not upon Mary but upon her promised Son.

The message of the angel revealed to Mary that her Son should be *Jesus,* the Saviour. He was coming to redeem Israel,

to "save his people from their sins"—and not Israel only, but all the world. This was He of Whose coming Isaiah prophesied when he said that "a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name *Immanuel.*" Nor was this all. The angel who appeared to Mary said that her Son should be a *King,* "and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

As our Saviour, He came to save us from our sins. He "was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Has His coming made any difference to your life? Is He in our workshop? Is He in our office? Is He in our home? Is He in our amusements? "God with us" will sanctify every relationship of life. He claims to have control over our life, for is He not the *King?* "Of his kingdom there shall be no end." Has it begun in you? The religion of Jesus Christ is not for one time or for one land, for "he .... hath made of one blood all nations of men," and you and I have to spread the kingdom of our Lord if He really is our King.

It is astonishing that although nineteen hundred years have passed away there should still be so many who do not recognize His claims over them. May it be ours to know *Jesus* to be our Saviour! May we realize His presence in our lives as our *Immanuel!* May we recognize His claims as our *King!* Then and then only shall we pass through this world with an assurance of the future glory.—*Selected.*

Wednesday, 26th. Luke ii. 1-20.

Ver. 8-11. The history of the angels is itself full of fascination. Clouded in mystery, so far as revelation is concerned, but we find them in our Bible as intelligent beings, unfallen and without sin, interested in man's history. In one brief touch Job tells us that these angels, the sons of God, sang for joy at creation. And we see them in the Garden of Eden, and we find them all through the Bible ministering to men through the long years. They seem to link earth with heaven. Bringing messages, rebuking prophets, comforting saints; ever and anon we find them.

But come to the next level and watch in connection with the birth of Jesus the activity of man; and I am speaking of that activity on its highest plane. There are three things I would have you notice: The voice of prophecy, long silent, was heard again. Great songs and anthems—none had been composed for long years—broke spontaneously from the hearts of men and women. And finally, seers who knew not the oracles, and were without the covenants of Jehovah, were led by the shining of a star to the hour and to the attitude of worship.

The supreme splendor of that birth was the lowliness of it, the humiliation of it. By that lowliness and humiliation God did reveal to all ages the essential dignity of human nature. I know it is revolutionary; I know two millenniums have gone and the world does not yet believe. But there it is, God's lesson for all ages. When God stooped; when He brought the First-Begotten into the inhabited earth; when He laid hold upon our human nature; when He "was made flesh," He proved that surroundings neither ennoble nor degrade humanity. A court and a crown would not have ennobled the Babe; the stable and the manger did not degrade Him. "Ye shall find the babe, ... lying in a manger"—and as though to emphasize the weakness and the humility and the simplicity of it—"wrapped in swaddling clothes." "'This,' said the angel, 'shall be a sign unto you,' not songs at midnight, not the star moving through the heavens, not the wrath of man, but the Babe, that is the sign." Humanity needs no court, no crown, no garments to make it full of dignity. Humanity cannot be degraded in itself by the circumstances in the midst of which it comes. There is the supreme splendor of it. Manhood in its perfection is closely allied to Divinity and Glory. And Humanity, closely allied to Divinity and Glory in its perfection, lies with a wonderful perfection and dignity, even in babyhood, in a manger.—*G. Campbell Morgan.*

Thursday, 27th. Luke ii. 39-52.

Ver. 51. It is distinctly one of the complaints of the present day that a very large number of parents, both in the upper and the lower classes, do not attend to the moral training of their families. In fashionable life it is quite common for children to be handed over to nurses and governesses, and to see little of their fathers and mothers. The old custom of reading the Bible every morning with the souls whom God has given them is in such circles, of course, extinct; the very idea would be received with derision. Nor are characters watched, faults checked, ideas trained.

And this neglect is helped by certain necessary steps which the law has taken in modern times for the protection of children in so vast and complicated a social system as ours. Our lawgivers, in insisting that children shall be well brought up and have a fair start in life, have, rather, led to the impression that the duties of the father have been undertaken by the State. "What will parents be able to say to God at the Day of Judgment for their neglect of their children in the matter of instruction and example or restraint from evil?" wrote the great Archbishop Tillotson in the seventeenth century, and we cannot help feeling that such a question brings with it in these days even an increased sense of

shame and regret. The mother holds the key of the soul, and she it is who stamps the coin of character, and makes the being who would be a savage but for her gentle care a Christian man. There is no limit to what a mother can do for her children. But the father's influence comes only next to the mother's. There should be a mutual understanding between father and son from the very first, never to be broken. Let a parent make a companion of his child, talk with him familiarly, put to him questions, answer his inquiries, communicate facts, the result of his own reading, observation, or experience, awaken his wholesome curiosity—and all this in an easy playful way, without seeming to be doing a task, and he himself will be astonished at the progress made.

But again, the neglectful parents cannot have the slightest idea of what an incalculable pleasure they are depriving themselves by taking no interest in the development of the minds of their children. As soon as the intelligence begins to dawn, the act of impressing it becomes most fascinating, a delight.—*W. M. Sinclair.*

Friday, 28th. Luke iii.

Ver. 14. "Be content with your wages." This is a time when it is quite certain we have not reached the summit of our striving, but when it seems to almost everyone that we are very near it. Hence an unhealthy, feverish impatience. In slower days men took duties for theirs and left results to God. It is not easy to do so now. Duties have been done long enough; causes have been pleaded; mountains have been scaled; and it is for us now to enter into fruition.

But the times and the seasons are still in the power of the Father, and with Him it is better we should leave them. Many causes have been sharply retarded because their leaders committed themselves to chronological prophecies. "Three years—and then cometh harvest,"—said the man of the golden mouth; and, because of that, fifty years have come and gone, and the harvest is still unreaped. The mountain climber achieves one height to find another far above him. On the very verge of attainment some undreamt-of foe rises out of the earth, and our hopes are thrown back for years. Work is done poorly, hastily, nervously, and with grudging under these conditions. Let us return to the ways of the wiser workmen into whose labors we have entered. They toiled on for long and far results. They thankfully accepted every sign and token, however faint, of progress. But they lived on little of such fare, and were stronger and calmer than we, to whom it often seems that summer is at the doors. Instead of always anticipating the end, let us toil on and feel no pang, though it is delayed till we are no more in these streets and beneath these skies.

It is hard to pay the price of honesty. It is not so much that a true man cares for himself as for his influence and for the cause dear to him. The party has probably given him at least as much as he has given the party. Outside he is accepted as its representative, and its adherents are ready with their "loud huzzas" for everything he says. His comrades, whom he has acted with till they have become a kind of second conscience to him, are estranged—perhaps embittered. Life is hardly long enough for such wrenches as these. But for conscience' sake they must be borne, though influence, reputation, friends, and career should all go. Whenever conscience is dead the grave is dug for all the faculties, however loud and busy they may be. We need this for our life as a nation—men who will not sell the truth, and with it their own souls, to any party, ecclesiastical, theological, or political.

Consider Christ and His chosen vessel, St. Paul. Both most dearly prized recognition; both thanked God and took courage at every token of cheer; both experienced the bitterest secrets of solitude. Through long tracts the life of Christ flowed on like the Nile, uncheered by the refreshment of tributary streams, to the lonely and awful end. St. Paul had no one to stand by him in an experience after which a man is never the same. Both deliberately provoked the violence of the forces by which their lives ended. Yet how much they made of the smallest token of affection; with what a wealth of promise and benediction our Lord welcomed kindness to Himself and others like Him when He said, "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward"!

If duty is to be done steadily, calmly, and faithfully in our days, these are the examples that must guide us. The appointed end is sure; though the time and track of progress may be and will be at variance with our hopes and dreams. Jesus has yet many things to say to us; we could not bear them now.—*W. Robertson Nicoll.*